



Engraved by Agate

MARIA ANTONIETTA
OF AUSTRIA,
Queen of France.

Published Feb^y. 1797, by Cadell & Davies, Strand.



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PRIVATE MEMO

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LAST YEAR OF THE REIGN

THIS IS THE SIXTEENTH,

LATE KING OF FRANCE.

MANAGER OF STATE AT THAT TIME.

Translated from the Original Manuscript of the Author,
which has never been published.

WITH FIVE PORTRAITS FROM ORIGINAL PICTURES
OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OF FRANCE.

14. THE NEW WORLD.

VOL. II.



MARIA ANTONIETTA

of Austria

Queen of France

Portrait of Maria Antonietta

282915
PRIVATE MEMOIRS

RELATIVE TO THE

LAST YEAR OF THE REIGN

OF

LEWIS THE SIXTEENTH,

LATE KING OF FRANCE.

By ANT. FR. BERTRAND DE MOLEVILLE,
MINISTER OF STATE AT THAT TIME.

Translated from the Original Manuscript of the Author,
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WITH FIVE PORTRAITS, FROM ORIGINAL PICTURES,
OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OF FRANCE.

— *quæque ipse miserrima vidi*
Et quorum pars—

VIRG.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for A. STRAHAN; and T. CADELL jun. and
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1797.

PRIVATE MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF

THE

PRINCE OF

WALLES

BY



AND

OF

THE

REIGN

OF

THE

PRINCE

OF

WALLES

BY

THE

REIGN

OF

THE

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

CHAP. XV.

SINGULAR conversation with Linguet.—His proposal of sending M. Duchilleau to St. Domingo.—Conditions proposed by Madame Duchilleau.—Linguet's denunciation against me in the assembly.—Sensibility of the king.—Proof of his fidelity to the constitution.—M. de Narbonne.—Characteristic traits respecting the king. — Page 1

CHAP. XVI.

Measures taken by the ministers to gain over the principal journalists of Paris.—M. de Narbonne takes upon him to treat with Brissot and Condorcet.—Consequences of this negotiation.—Atrocious imputations against the king by Brissot, in the paper of the 28th of January.—I denounce this paper in the council, and propose that the author should be prosecuted by the *Accusateur Public*.—The other ministers think it better to despise this insult.—I write to the king upon this subject.—Appearance of rupture with Algiers.—Rapid success of the measures employed upon this occasion.—Remarkable offer of the Dey to the king.—Secret message of Tippoo Saib.—His presents.—A conversation with the queen. — 23

CHAP. XVII.

Insulting letter from the president of the assembly to the king, which his majesty sends to the ministerial committee.—Letter written by me, upon this occasion, to the king.—Important measures are taken to form a royalist party in the assembly, which fail, through the indiscretion of M. de Narbonne.—A division in the council.—Its consequences. Page 43

CHAP. XVIII.

Generals Rochambeau, la Fayette, and Luckner arrive at Paris.—Their conversation with the king.—They are introduced into the council.—M. de Narbonne absents himself from the ministerial committees.—M. de la Fayette comes to the committee.—Speaks of the ill consequences which must attend the misunderstanding among the ministers.—He proposes that I should retire from the administration.—My letter to M. de Narbonne respecting an article in Brissot's journal.—A letter from each of the three generals to M. de Narbonne. 59

CHAP. XIX.

The ministers assemble to examine the conduct of M. de Narbonne.—They unanimously agree never more to sit in the council with him.—My resignation.—Letter from M. de Lessart to the king.—My conversation with his majesty.—Dismission of M. de Narbonne.—Violent discontents in the assembly.—Decree against M. de Lessart.—Death of the Emperor. The Chevalier de Graves appointed minister of war.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. XX.

An impertinent letter which I received from M. Cahier de Gerville.—My explanation with him, and its consequences.—M. la Coste called to the ministry.—His character.—M. Duport de Tertre, Cahier de Gerville, and Tarbé, their characters and dismissal.—Dumourier called by M. de Lessart.—Supplants him.—Character of M. de Lessart. - Page 101

CHAP. XXI.

The account of my administration given in to the assembly.—It is printed, and distributed over the kingdom.—Discontent of the Jacobins. - 122

CHAP. XXII.

M. de Fleurieu named governor to the Prince Royal, but not invested in the office.—After my resignation, the king desires me to keep up a correspondence by letters with him.—The object of this.—His majesty consigns to me the direction of certain affairs, which had been formerly under the superintendence of M. de Lessart.—Spies employed by the tribunal of police.—Arrangement made with one of the principal members of the tribunal.—Measures equally expensive and useless.—Danton paid by the court.—The new ministers oblige the king to declare war, much against his inclination. - 147

CHAP. XXIII.

The critical situation in which the king was.—Imposture of an Austrian committee renewed.—Carra denounces M. de Montmorin and me in the Jacobin club

club as members of that pretended committee.—We give in a complaint against him, and against several journalists.—Proposal sent to me by the Jacobins.—Imprudence of the Judge Larivière.—Decree of accusation against him.—Brissot and Gensonné undertake to prove the truth of the Austrian committee. - - - Page 168

C H A P. XXIV.

A secret message to foreign courts, with which M. Mallet-du-Pan is entrusted.—I advise the king to recommend him to the Baron de Breteuil.—His majesty's answer.—The effect which the unhappy issue of his journey to Varennes had produced on the king's mind, with respect to the Baron de Breteuil.—The powers with which his majesty had entrusted that minister.—The period and motives of their revocation.—Cause of the quarrel between Messrs. de Breteuil and Calonne.—The king orders me to recommend Mallet-du-Pan to the marechal de Castries, and to correspond with the former.—Mallet-du-Pan being arrived in Germany, receives a credential under the king's hand.—Exhausted state of the civil list.—Secret loan. - - - 186

C H A P. XXV.

The decree of accusation issued against Larivière intimidates his colleagues.—Madame de Lamoignon's Memoirs are secretly burnt at Seves.—Consequences.—A band of ruffians, in the pay of the Jacobins, are employed to excite popular commotions.—The assembly pass a decree for disbanding the king's constitutional guards; and on the same day, one of accusation

CONTENTS.

vii

cusation against the duke de Brissac.—The ministers oblige the king to sanction the decree for disbanding the guards.—My letter, advising his majesty to refuse his sanction, arrives too late. Page 247

C H A P. XXVI.

The decrees against the non-juring priests, and for forming a camp in the neighbourhood of Paris.—Division in the cabinet on that occasion.—Dumourier prevails on the king to dismiss three of his ministers.—Miaczenski.—The king prevents a pamphlet from being published against Dumourier.—Fabrication of assignats in the prison.—Important discoveries respecting the troubles in St. Domingo.—The mulatto Raimond.—Resignation of Dumourier.—A singular letter from him to M. de Larosiere. 264

C H A P. XXVII.

The real motive for the two decrees.—A secretary of Condorcet's pays a visit to M. de Lessart in prison, and informs him of the projects agreed upon in the secret committee of the Jacobins.—M. de Lessart writes an account of this to me.—I send his letter to the king.—Petitions against one of the decrees.—The attempt of the 20th of June.—Proclamation.—The good effect it produces.—Decree of the department suspending Petion.—The king forced to pronounce on that decree, and to confirm it.—The assembly repeals it.—The king's fatal forebodings.—An interesting conversation with him upon the event of the 20th of June.—Plan which I proposed to his majesty.—His motives for not adopting it. 288

CHAP. XXVIII.

Representations made to the king upon the necessity of adopting a plan, and adhering to it.—The king approves of the proposal of concerting with M. Montmorin and M. Malouet, respecting his situation.—His majesty's sentiments of M. Malouet.—Plan for gaining the tribunes of the assembly.—Rejected by the king, but executed without his knowledge.—He discovers this, and orders its suspension.—General plan of conduct proposed to his majesty.—M. de la Fayette. - - - Page 309

CHAP. XXIX.

A design formed by Santerre of murdering the queen.—Prevented.—One of my letters to the queen taken from my table by a journalist.—The arrival of the Marseillois at Paris.—Measures proposed to the king on that occasion.—A club established under the name of National Club.—Lieutaut's troop.—Mayor of Etampes. - - - 336

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Lettre de Condorcet au Roi. - 355

No. II.

Lettre au Roi. - - - 356

No. III.

Lettre au Roi, - - - 358

No. IV.

CONTENTS.

ix

No. IV.

Lettre de M. de Lessart au Roi. - Page 359

No. V.

Lettre au Roi. - - - 367

No. VI.

Lettre du Roi à l'Assemblée Nationale, à l'occasion des
observations qu'elle avoit adressées le 8 Mars à S. M.
contre le ministre de la marine. - 369

No. VII.

Extrait du Mercure Français du Samedi, 4 Fevrier
1792. - - - 371

No. VIII.

Note sur quelques insurrections qui se sont manifestées
à bord des bâtimens de l'Etat, et des Juris qui ont
été tenus à cette occasion. - 376

No. IX.

Lettre du Roi à l'Assemblée Nationale, relativement au
prétendu Comité Autrichien. - 399

No. X.

Exposé de la conduite du marquis de Bouillé, rédigé
par lui-même pour être remis au Roi. - 400

ERRATA IN VOL. II.

Page	19. line	21.	<i>for dans le read dans la</i>
93.	—	21.	<i>for notre read votre</i>
192.	—	11.	<i>dele and to M. de Breteuil himself</i>
365.	—	22.	<i>for préféré read préfere</i>
397.	—	2.	<i>for qu'i lavoit read qu'il avoit</i>
404.	—	3.	<i>for avois read avoit</i>

PRIVATE MEMOIRS.

CHAP. XV.

Singular conversation with Linguet.—His proposal of sending M. Duchilleau to St. Domingo.—Conditions proposed by Madame Duchilleau.—Linguet's denunciation against me in the assembly.—Sensibility of the king.—Proof of his fidelity to the constitution.—M. de Narbonne.—Characteristic traits respecting the king.

THE applause which my discourse on the disasters of St. Domingo obtained in the assembly did not prevent its displeasing the partisans of the liberty of the blacks, particularly Brissot and Condorcet, whose opinions, without naming the men, I had refuted in such a manner as to

make their absurdity evident to the majority of the assembly. This was a slight revenge for the sarcasms which daily appeared against me in both their Journals: but I irritated my accusers still more, by the observation which terminated my discourse, which was an attack so direct, as to fix all eyes upon them.

The day after I had pronounced that discourse, which had in some degree re-established my credit, a person, who would not tell his name, demanded a short audience of me, "to communicate things of the utmost importance." As my present situation exacted of me to be upon my guard against such visits, I did not choose to receive him in my closet, and I went into my saloon, that I might be nearer the antichamber where my domestics were. I found a little man, ill dressed, and of no very agreeable countenance. Advancing towards him, "Is it you, sir," said I, "who had things of importance to communicate to me?"

"Yes, sir, it is me."

"Well,

"Well, upon what subject?" said I.

"To render you the greatest possible service," returned he; "for you will surely consider as such my indicating to you the only means of re-establishing good order and peace in St. Domingo?"

"Yes, certainly," said I.

"Well, sir, I bring you these means," returned he.

"If they are as certain as you say—"

"*If* they are as certain!" continued he.

"Do you think that if they were not, I would have quitted my country residence to come and lose my time here, in conversation with you, and make you lose your's also? Yes, sir, the means I have to propose are certain, and very certain. I do not pretend to inform you, sir," continued he, "that it is to the weakness of M. Blanchelande that all the evil is to be attributed. You would not, perhaps, acknowledge this, because you are a minister, consequently may think yourself entitled to dissemble, and to hold a language contrary

to your real sentiments: but it is sufficient for me that I know what must be your opinion of M. Blanchelande. I am convinced, that if you could at this moment lay your hands upon a man of a superior character," added he, with exultation, "one already known at St. Domingo, for his energy, his firmness, and his justice, generally esteemed, respected, and feared by the blacks, the whites, and men of all colours, capable of overawing by his presence alone; if you knew of such a man, I repeat it, would you not be happy to be enabled to send him immediately to that island? Well, sir, it is this very man whom I come to offer you. I do not mean myself, but my second self, M. Duchilleau, my intimate friend. He is at this moment about a hundred leagues from Paris, and certainly has no idea that I am speaking to you of him. I have not yet wrote to him upon the subject. Your discourse in the assembly yesterday suggested the idea. I am even not very certain that he would accept the situation,

tion, unless I use all my influence to determine him, and also promise to accompany him."

My astonishment prevented my interrupting the man's volubility. At last, having a little recovered myself, I asked him, "Pray, sir, in what quality do you propose to accompany M. Duchilleau? As his aid-de-camp?"

"His aid-de-camp!" replied he. "You may see, sir, that I am neither of an age, nor have I the appearance, surely, of an aid-de-camp. Besides, it is not my line. But here is the point: Duchilleau, who is perhaps the best governor for the colonies that we have had for a long time, perfectly understands all which concerns the military department: but he understands nothing of the civil administration; and it is that which I shall take upon myself."

"Very well," said I, smiling; "but it is necessary that I should know your name."

"For what purpose? Is not my proposal good enough for my name to be dispensed with?"

"I do not say the contrary," resumed I: "but do you think that I can propose to the king to send an anonymous person to the intendance of St. Domingo?"

"Well, sir, my name is Linguet."

"O, M. Linguet, I am very happy to see you."

"But, my proposal," resumed he: "what think you of it? You seem to laugh."

"That does not prevent me," answered I, "from giving it just weight. I promise you to lay it before the king, who knows M. Duchilleau a great deal better than I do."

"But if you laugh," said he, "when you mention it to the king, he will laugh also; and *your* affair will fail. I call it *your* affair, and not M. Duchilleau's and mine, for on our part it is a sacrifice."

I wished him good morning, and assured him that I would speak to the king with all the seriousness that the case required.

I received, the same day, a note from Madame Duchilleau, requesting a rendezvous for next day, which I gave her. I supposed

supposed that Linguet had given her an account of our conversation, and that what she had to say was in consequence of it. She was very exact in coming at the hour I had appointed. She told me that she was informed of her husband's having been thought of for the government of St. Domingo; and as he was not then in Paris, she came, in his name, to talk with me upon the subject, knowing perfectly well the only conditions on which he would accept of that situation. I answered, "that I did not know of M. Duchilleau's having been thought of for the government of St. Domingo; that it was true Linguet had mentioned it to me the preceding morning, but that the king had never said a word upon the subject. However, (I added,) as his majesty may possibly have an eye to M. Duchilleau, she might, if she pleased, inform me of the conditions upon which he would accept of it." She then drew out of her pocket a memorandum of four pages, which she read, and left with me. The principal conditions were, First, The payment of debts contracted by M.

Duchilleau, in consequence of the losses he had sustained by being suddenly dismissed from that government. These were estimated at 300,000 livres. Secondly, The expence of his voyage and establishment, 200,000. Thirdly, Annual salary as governor, 300,000. Fourthly, The *cordon rouge*. Fifthly, The power of changing and replacing all civil and military officers. Sixthly, *Carte blanche* with regard to his manner of conducting his administration, &c. &c.

However valuable the services of M. Duchilleau might be, the new regulations did not permit their being purchased at the high price that his wife set upon them; and she assured me that she positively would not make the least abatement in her demands. Therefore the account I gave of these conditions to the council served only to shew the high opinion she entertained of her husband's merit, against which I am far from raising any doubt. I was not acquainted with M. Duchilleau; was but imperfectly informed of the situation in which the island was, when he was at St.

Domingo;

Domingo ; and I was entirely ignorant of the motives of his recall.

Linguet was enraged at the bad success of his proposals, and endeavoured to revenge himself, by taking upon him to bring forward a most indecent and ridiculous accusation against me in the assembly. Two of the keepers of the magazines at Trincomale in the East Indies, having been convicted of embezzlement to the value of more than a million of livres, were ordered to be arrested, and sent for trial to France. The documents relating to this affair had been transmitted to the minister of the marine; and there was a paper amongst them, written and signed by both of the accusers, in which they confessed that they were guilty of embezzlement to a certain extent, but that the value of the effects which they had embezzled did not amount to more than 300,000 livres. These two men, whose names were Labadie and Gallet, on their arrival in France, had been lodged in the prison at Brest, at the beginning of the revolution; and the more important affairs with which the

the

the ministers were at that time occupied had, very fortunately for the criminals, prevented the prosecution of their trial. As they were convinced that they could not escape a capital condemnation, they took care not to complain of the slowness of the proceedings. Upon the suppression of the ancient courts of justice, and the establishment of new judges, this affair was carried before the tribunal of the district of Quimper. By means of money and intrigue the prisoners contrived to bring on their trials in 1791, without the knowledge of government; consequently the papers which were in my office, relative to this affair, were not produced against them; and the court, finding no proof of their guilt, entirely acquitted them.

The prisoners being thus set at liberty, kept themselves very quiet, and never sought to take advantage of their acquittal until the assembly took under their protection about twenty seditious fellows, whom M. de Fresné, governor of Pondicherry, had sent back to France. A decree

was pronounced in justification of those twenty persons, attributing their conduct to the zeal of patriotism ; and an order was given that they might be transmitted back to India at the public expence.

The keepers of the magazine of Trincomale imagined that this decree might possibly include them, and came to me, representing themselves as victims of despotism ; and not only demanded to participate in the benefits of the decree, but also claimed the sum of 150,000 livres, as an indemnification for their long and unjust detention. The first time they came to my levee, to present their memorial, I was ignorant of the business: but I told them, " that I could not take upon me to comprehend them in the decree, as the persons in whose favour it was issued were particularly named ; and that there were no such names as Labadie or Gallet in the list. That with respect to the indemnification they claimed, I would examine their right to it, and do them justice."

They

They returned in about a week after; and though they had been informed, in my office, that the papers containing the proofs against them were under my examination, they had the effrontery still to claim an indemnification.

"Are you in your senses?" said I, with indignation, and loud enough to be heard by all the people who had come to my levee.

"Yes, sir," said they, rather embarrassed by my question.

"And do you imagine," resumed I, "that I am so little in possession of mine, as to grant fifty thousand crowns of indemnification to people who have only been done injustice to in not having been hanged according to their deserts?"

"How, sir! Were we not acquitted?"

"You were so," replied I, "but only because the papers of which I am in possession, containing the proofs against you, were not produced. But here they are; and you may depend upon it I shall order the matter to be revised, and we shall then see

fee what is due to you for having stole from government, according to your own confession, to the amount of 300,000 livres."

This speech rather confounded them. They retired, threatening to complain to the assembly of my ministerial despotism, of my harshness, &c. The first step they took was to consult Linguet, who, with the utmost alacrity, undertook their defence. He prepared a long discourse, in the form of a petition, which was announced to the assembly as a capital accusation against me. This was sufficient to obtain him permission to speak as soon as he presented himself at the bar, and to gain him the support of all my enemies in the assembly.

Having fixed, with Linguet, on the day on which he was to bring his accusation, they advised him not to appear until the evening meeting, because it was generally less punctually attended than those of the morning; and it would therefore be easier to bring a majority. According to this arrangement, Linguet appeared in the assembly

sembly at the evening sitting, and took his place at the bar betwixt his two clients. Having obtained permission to speak, he began his discourse with a very long and circumstantial account of our first settlements in India. He enlarged, with great emphasis and gesticulation, upon the vices of their administration, upon the incapacity and despotism of the agents of government, &c. The assembly shewed symptoms of impatience at an harangue so little to the point. Linguet continued, without mercy. At last, they were so worn out, that they uttered deep groans; some yawned aloud; one called out, "*au deluge avocat* *!" others, "to the point; for heaven's sake, to the point." Linguet, irritated at this insult, only answered by looks of indignation, which he darted on all sides against the exclaimers. The president's bell at last re-established silence, and Linguet again took up the thread of his discourse; but at so early a period of our settlement, that the

* Vide *Les Plaideurs*, a comedy of Racine.

patience of the members being exhausted, the cry "*au deluge avocat! au deluge!*" was renewed with such vehemence, that the president thought proper to request of M. Linguet to adhere to the matter contained in his petition.

"I know better than any one," answered M. Linguet, with a very stately air, "upon what the interest of my clients exacts that I should speak, and on what I ought to be silent. You shall hear all or nothing."

"Nothing, nothing, nothing," was echoed from all sides. It was evident that the nothings had it. The president granted to the petitioners the honours of the *seance*, and told them to leave their petition at the bar.

"No, M. le President," answered Linguet, in rage; "I shall carry off my discourse, since the assembly will not listen to it; and as for the honours of the sitting, I thank you, but I have something else to do."

Saying this, he retreated in a fury, tearing his papers to pieces, to the great mirth of the audience.

When

When I came to the council, I was informed of every circumstance of this scene, which I related to the king, who was the more pleased with the ludicrous catastrophe, because he had been apprehensive of some troublesome consequence to me from this manoeuvre.

In this same council we were witnesses to a scene of a very different nature, much too interesting to be passed over in silence. M. Cahier de Gerville read aloud the sketch or rough draught of a proclamation he proposed, relative to the assassination, pillaging, and other acts of violence, at that time very frequent; particularly against the nobility, on the pretext of aristocracy, &c. In the proposed proclamation was the following sentence, "*Those disorders interrupt the happiness we at present enjoy.*" He had no sooner pronounced it than the king said, "That sentence must be altered."

M. de Gerville having read the expression again, replied, "I perceive nothing that requires to be altered, sire."

"Do

“Do not make me speak of my happiness,” resumed his majesty, with emotion. “I cannot authorize such a falsehood. How can I be happy, M. de Gerville, at a time when nobody is happy in France? No, sir, the French are *not* happy: I see it but too well. They will be so, I hope; and I wish it very ardently. When that time arrives, I also shall be happy, and shall then be able, with truth, to declare it.”

These words, which the king uttered with a faltering voice, made a lively impression upon us, and was followed by a general silence, which prevailed some minutes. His majesty being apprehensive that those marks of sensibility, which he had not been able to repress, would raise a suspicion against his attachment to the constitution, seized an opportunity, which M. de Gerville afforded him a few minutes after, of showing that he was determined to adhere very scrupulously to his engagements in support of it; for in an affair reported by M. de Gerville, he pronounced

an opinion more strictly conformable to the letter of the constitution than that of the minister himself. The particulars of this I need not give at present, as they must appear hereafter, in the account of my administration which I laid before the assembly, upon my dismissal.

As M. de Gerville was more enthusiastically fond of the constitution than any one of the council, he was confounded and rather abashed to find that the king was inclined to adhere to it more scrupulously than himself.

The solemnity of this meeting was somewhat interrupted by a little incident, of which I should have taken no notice, had it not been for the pleasantry or *jeu de mots* it occasioned from M. de Narbonne.

While the king was raising himself from his chair, and reaching across the table for a pen, a noise of an equivocal nature, probably proceeding from the movement of the chair, was so distinctly heard as to disconcert a little every person present, who, after staring, with an air of surprize, in one another's

another's faces, as if they had meant to plead *not guilty*, resumed the consideration of the business before them. The council being over, the ministers went to the room in the palace appointed for their committees. The feeling manner in which the king had expressed his own unhappiness, and his concern for that of the nation, had made so deep an impression, that we could speak of nothing but of his virtues. M. de Narbonne, speaking in his turn, said, with the most serious air imaginable, "Gentlemen, I partake very sincerely your respect and admiration of the king's good qualities : but nevertheless, as we are not the only persons his majesty consults, it will be prudent in us to be on our guard, more especially after what we have just heard in the council ; and reflecting on the whole with coolness, it may naturally be suspected that the king is more ready than ever *de nous pèter dans le main* *.

* A common French phrase, used when a person wishes to deceive you, or escape from you ; but the double meaning is entirely lost in the translation.

This excited so much mirth in the committee, that it was impossible to think of any business that day.

It was a remarkable feature in the king's character, which particularly showed the turn of his mind, that his natural timidity, and the difficulty he found in expressing his ideas, never appeared when religion, the relief of the people, or the happiness of France, were in question. Upon these occasions he always delivered himself with an energy and facility which never failed to astonish the new ministers, who were prepossessed with the prevailing opinion of the king's narrow capacity. I do not pretend to assert that Lewis the Sixteenth was a great genius ; but of this I am certain, that his natural capacity was very far above mediocrity ; and that had it been cultivated by an education well calculated for his future rank in life, he would have been classed among the best and ablest of our kings. We had daily opportunities of seeing him give what has been generally considered as proofs of an active and comprehensive mind.

mind. While he was reading letters, or memorials, or newspapers, he could, at the same time, attend to the discussions of the council with such distinctness and discrimination as enabled him to understand the whole ; as afterwards appeared, by the account he gave of what he read and had heard. A striking instance of this occurred one day, on which he had read several memorials, and letters, and journals, while the ministers were making reports on the affairs of their departments, and particularly while M. Cahier de Gerville made one, on a question of some delicacy, after which the decision was postponed for eight days : but when that minister, in making his second report, happened to omit an essential circumstance which had been in the first, the king directly put him in mind of it, to the astonishment of us all, who had believed that he had been too much occupied with the memorials and letters, because he had, at the time, made pertinent observations on them. What is certain is, that none of us could contend with the king in point of

memory; and his judgment was no less excellent.

This I can affirm with truth, that during all the time that I was in administration, every paper of importance, of whatever kind, that was submitted to the king's examination, after it had been discussed in the council, was improved by the alterations his majesty suggested.

CHAP. XVI.

Measures taken by the ministers to gain over the principal Journalists of Paris.—M. de Narbonne takes upon him to treat with Brissot and Condorcet.—Consequences of this negotiation.—Atrocious imputations against the king by Brissot, in the paper of the 28th of January.—I denounce this paper in the council, and propose that the author should be prosecuted by the Accusateur Public.—The other ministers think it is better to despise this insult.—I write to the king upon this subject.—Appearance of rupture with Algiers.—Rapid success of the measures employed upon this occasion.—Remarkable offer of the Dey to the King.—Secret message of Tippoo Saib.—His presents.—A conversation with the queen.

THE great influence which the Journals had on the public opinion made the ministers think it of importance to insure

their silence, if they could not acquire their praise. This question was thoroughly discussed in a committee of ministers, which was held at M. Cahier de Gerville's. M. de Narbonne took it upon him to negotiate with Brissot, author of the paper intitled *Le Patriote François*, and with Condorcet, author of *La Chronique de Paris*. The result of this negotiation was, that the two Journalists praised M. de Narbonne, and attacked M. de Lessart and me with more virulence than ever. We remarked this to M. de Narbonne, who answered, that he had expressed his displeasure at their conduct, and that they daily gave him the most positive assurances that they would change their style; and he promised to speak to them again. He did so, without doubt, but with so little effect, that Brissot, not contented with attacking the ministers in whom the king placed the greatest confidence, even pushed his audacity the length of publishing the most atrocious calumnies against his majesty, in his paper of the 28th of January. I denounced this
paper

paper in the council, as an attempt of a criminal nature, which deserved exemplary punishment: but the more antient ministers, and the king himself, accustomed to despise pamphlets, put less importance upon it. They did not reflect, that although in times of tranquillity, and under a well-regulated government, the insolence of a journalist may be safely despised, yet in the present situation of France, such an incendiary publication kept up the ferment that already existed in the minds of the populace, and tended to excite them to insurrection, pillage, and murder; and the mode so long adopted, of despising the insults of the journalists, only rendered them more dangerous; and so multiplied them, that their punishment became impossible. I added, that with regard to his majesty, if he persevered in thinking it beneath his dignity to take any notice of such calumnies, I had nothing more to say; but as for myself, although I was willing, while the journalists confined themselves to general abuse, to overlook and despise it, yet when particular

cular and specific facts were mentioned, if my rank as minister prevented me from the right of disproving them, I should desire leave of the king to resign my situation, and submit the case to a court of justice, that the falsehood of the accusations might be made manifest. The ministers admitted the force of this reasoning with respect to me, but said it could not be applied to attacks made on the king, because the constitution was completely silent as to any method of proceeding against journalists who should venture to publish calumnies against him.

“No express law,” answered I, “existed in ancient Rome against the crime of parricide, because it had not entered into the mind of the legislature that such a crime would be committed; but assuredly it was never meant by the Romans, that a son who murdered his father should pass unpunished. In my opinion, the silence of the constitution on the crime of calumniating the king, cannot be thought more favourable to Brissot.”

Nevertheless, upon account of the delicate circumstances in which the king was placed, it was thought prudent to deliberate upon the most proper manner of managing this affair, and therefore the ministers agreed to take it into consideration at a future meeting.

The king was endowed with a very just judgment, but unhappily of so timid a disposition, and so distrustful of himself, that he was apt to prefer the opinions of weaker people to his own, and always adopted that of the majority of his council: but as I had more confidence in the king's judgment than in that of my colleagues, I never proposed any thing of importance, either in a committee of the ministers, or in council, without having first submitted it to his majesty's examination. This I did upon the present occasion, as appears from the subsequent letter, which I wrote the following day to his majesty.

" January 31, 1792.

" I have the honour to submit to your majesty the contents of a letter to the
national

national assembly, respecting the execrable paper the *Patriote*, which appeared on Sunday.

“After mature consideration on the most proper steps to be taken, I am of opinion, that a denunciation made to the *Accusateur Public* by the ministers, either as agents of the executive power, or as citizens, might equally be considered as irregular, because the manner of proceeding is not clearly indicated in the constitution : but it evidently lays the king under the obligation of employing the power delegated to him for the maintenance of the constitution, and in support of the laws. This obligation comprehends that of making the constituted powers be respected, and of requiring the execution of the seventeenth article of the fifth chapter of the constitution. This article necessarily applies to the offence committed by the author and printer of the paper intitled *Le Patriote François* ; the king then may order the *Accusateur Public* to give them up to justice. It may even be maintained, with reason, that his majesty's
oath

oath to the constitution imports that very obligation; and as the motives which determine such a step are of considerable importance, it would be proper for the king to inform the assembly, by a letter expressed in such a manner as would make a favourable impression. I presume that the letter, a copy of which I have the honour to transmit to your majesty, will answer the purpose. Your majesty will please to let me know whether it has your approbation: if it has, I shall lay it this evening before the committee."

His majesty sent me the following answer:

"Your advice seems to me good; and the letter also, excepting some words, which must be changed. But as this affair, which appears to me of a delicate nature, is not in your department, and as the order and the letter which you propose must be countersigned by the minister of justice, I shall wait the determination of the committee*."

In

* "Votre avis me paroit bon; et la lettre aussi, sauf quelques mots à changer. Mais comme cette affaire, que je trouve délicate,

In this committee the ministers agreed that the form which I proposed was not contrary to the constitution; but they thought that so strong a measure would be the means of informing France, and all Europe, of a fact now known only to Brissot's subscribers, and would give a kind of celebrity to that journalist. This was possible; but it was much more certain, that entirely overlooking his conduct would render him more audacious, and encourage others to imitate his example. This happened accordingly; for from that period the king was insulted in the most revolting manner, by innumerable pamphlets, of which the people became the echo, and, by degrees, were emboldened to that degree, that crowds assembled under the windows of the Thuilleries almost every evening, and poured forth the grossest abuse against the king and royal family.

cate, n'est pas de votre département, et que l'ordre et la lettre que vous proposés doivent être contresignés par le ministre de la justice, j'attendrai le resultat du comité."

At

At this period France was menaced with a rupture with the regency of Algiers. All the French who happened to be there were conveyed back to Marfeilles; and by the same transport, an order was sent to the Algerines to quit France immediately. The French consul at Algiers was confined to his house by the Dey's orders, and expected every moment to be conducted to the gallies. The motive of this rupture was the pretended negligence of France, in fulfilling a promise which had been made to the Dey, of lending him a frigate for the purpose of transporting his ambaffador to Constantinople. Some agents of the court of Spain had excited this storm at Algiers. They perfuaded the Dey that the French revolution having annihilated the king's authority, it was no longer in his power to fulfil his engagements; that the assembly, which reigned in his place, respected none; that the regency would have no such proceedings to apprehend on the part of the court of Spain; and in order to convince the Dey, he was offered, in the name of his Catholic

Catholic majesty, a very fine Spanish frigate and a corvette, which had just then arrived at Algiers, with which he might, if he pleased, convey his ambassador to Constantinople; and in the mean time they begged that he would accept of a corvette as a present. These offers, which the Dey readily accepted, determined him to break openly with France, imagining that he could brave its resentment with impunity*.

I was informed of these circumstances by a courier extraordinary, sent by the African Company of Marseilles, who were greatly alarmed. I gave an account of them to the assembly, as also the amicable means adopted by the king to obtain satisfaction, and the vigorous measures preparing, in case it was refused.

The frigate promised to the Dey had been long ready in the port of Toulon, and its departure was only retarded in consequence of his own request that the command should be given to Captain Dou-

* This was the account transmitted to me by the French consul at Algiers.

mergue,

mergue, a man originally from France, but who had been long settled in Algiers, and was strongly protected by the Dey, who had an interest in most of his commercial schemes. That he might turn such an opportunity to the greatest profit, Doumergue had come to France to provide an advantageous cargo ; and the time necessary for this was the sole cause of the frigate's being so long detained. But it was now sent off with the utmost dispatch, under the command of an intelligent officer, who had instructions to explain the whole affair to the Dey, and to require satisfaction for the insult which the French consul had received. Captain Doumergue was sent with him, as an incontestible witness of the truth of these facts. The winds being favourable, the voyage was short : but on their arrival before Algiers, the frigate was refused entrance into the harbour, by the express command of the regency. Captain Doumergue was then sent ashore in a boat. He waited upon the Dey, had the order revoked, and in less than two hours the

frigate failed into the harbour. The officer who commanded it soon obtained an audience of the Dey, who was perfectly satisfied with the explanation he received, and acknowledged he had been deceived, but threw the whole blame upon the French consul, who had allowed him to remain in error; and he demanded that he should be recalled. On the following day the commander of the frigate was admitted to a second audience, and was received with distinguished respect. The Dey made him sit down by him, contrary to the usual custom, and talked of the affairs of France, particularly of the situation of the king, with the most lively interest. He told him that he had given orders for six Arabian horses to be conveyed on board his ship, as a present for his majesty; and that it was his intention to adhere to the treaty betwixt France and Algiers; and in order to do honour to this mission, he consented that the trade of France should this year draw from Algiers three vessels of grain over and above the number fixed by the
last

last treaty. Next day the commander of the frigate took his leave, and the Dey gave him a letter for the king. This officer set sail for Toulon, where he arrived in a short time, as he had taken in the crossing betwixt Toulon and Algiers, so that his mission was fulfilled in less than eight days; and I had the satisfaction of announcing to the assembly the issue, three weeks after I had announced the rupture with Algiers.

The rapidity and success of this negotiation excited so great a surprise, that my enemies affected to believe the whole affair to be a romance, fabricated for the purpose of diverting their attention from the denunciation against me. And this opinion would probably have prevailed, if the Arabian horses had not arrived, and if the deputies of the *Bouches du Rhone* had not been informed of the truth by their correspondents.

In the Dey's letter to his majesty, among many expressions of friendship and good will, he offered to assist the king to reduce

his rebellious subjects, in order to restore him to the possession of his just authority. It will easily be believed, that in the translation of this letter, which I laid before the assembly, I took care to suppress this sentence, which I should have been suspected of having suggested ; and it would certainly have been cited in the Journals as a proof of the existence of a horrible plot against the liberty of the nation.

During the negociation with Algiers, a secret message was sent to the king from Tippoo Saëb, who demanded of the king 6000 French troops, offering to pay their transportation, cloathing, and maintenance. He was convinced, that with this assistance he could destroy the English army and settlements in India, and ensure the possession to France. That nothing might transpire of this affair, Tippoo had not mentioned it in his council, and had secretly negociated the business with M. de Fresne, governor of Pondicherry, through the means of M. Leger, *administrateur civil* of France in India, who

who understood the Persian language, and who wrote the dispatches dictated by Tippoo relative to this embassy. M. Leger himself came from India to France with this message; and in order to conceal the real object of his voyage, some time before he set out he had declared that his private affairs would oblige him to return immediately to France.

As M. Leger was directed to the minister of marine, I informed the king of Tippoo Saëb's proposal: but notwithstanding its advantages, and although the insurrection of the negroes of St. Domingo rendered it necessary to send a considerable force there, under the pretence of which it would have been easy to have sent to the East Indies the 6000 men demanded by Tippoo, without raising the suspicion of the English government; the natural probity of the king's mind would not permit him to adopt this measure. "This resembles," said he, "the affair of America, which I never think of without regret. My youth was taken advantage of at that time, and we

D 3

suffer

suffer for it now. The lesson is too severe to be forgotten *."

The message of Tippoo Saëb was accompanied with presents for the king and queen. Those destined for the king consisted of an assortment of gold gauze, crimson silk stuffs flowered with gold, painted linen for three Persian dresses, twelve pieces of white linen of the finest quality, an aigrette of bad diamonds, flat and yellow and ill set, with a clasp ornamented in the same taste. The presents for the queen were still less valuable, consisting merely of three bottles half full of Indian essences, of a very inferior quality, and a box of perfumed powder balls and scented matches. When I presented the stuffs and diamonds to the king, he said to me, laughing, "What can I do with all this trumpery? It seems only proper to dress up dolls. But *you* have little girls; they may be pleased with them. Give the whole to them."

* "Ceci ressembleroit beaucoup (dit il) à l'affaire d'Amérique, à la quelle je ne pense jamais sans regret. On a un peu abusé de ma jeunesse dans ce temps la; nous en portons la peine aujourd'hui. La leçon est trop forte pour l'oublier."

"But

"But the diamonds, fire," said I.

"O, they are mighty fine, to be sure," added he, smiling. "Perhaps you would have them placed among the jewels of the crown. Pray take them also, and wear them in your hat, if you please."

The queen would receive only one bottle of the essence of roses. She made me a present of the rest, saying, that she valued nothing which came from India, except the beautiful linen. I then begged she would permit me to present her with that which the king gave me the preceding day.

"Willingly," said the queen: "but I won't take it all. How many pieces are there?"

"Twelve, madam," answered I.

"Well," said she, "bring me, at first, two pieces, and I will see whether they suit me. Besides, you will by this means have an apparent motive of seeing me oftener, without raising suspicion that you come to the pretended Austrian committee."

She then expressed how much the king had been hurt by that atrocious calumny,

which they daily endeavoured to confirm in the public papers by the most absurd falsehoods.

During this conversation, the little Dauphin, beautiful as an angel, was singing and skipping about in the queen's apartment, with a small wooden sabre and shield in his hand, which had been given him that day. They came to take him away to supper, and in two bounds he was at the door.

"How now, my son!" said the queen; "you are going without making a bow to M. Bertrand."

"O, mamma," said he, smiling, and continuing to jump, "is not M. Bertrand one of our friends? Good night, M. Bertrand!" So saying, he bounded out of the room.

"Is he not very pretty?" said the queen, when he was gone. "He is happy also in being so young; for," added she, with a sigh, "he does not feel our sorrows, and his gaiety does us good."

Unable to speak, I wiped my eyes, and her majesty resumed, "They harass *you* also,

also, M. Bertrand: but you pay no regard to them, for they do not know the constitution so well as you do. Are you not afraid, however, that those permissions of absence to navy officers, which you are accused of having granted in such profusion, will turn out ill? The king," continued she, "is really uneasy on that head."

"I am, assuredly, infinitely honoured," replied I, "and grateful for the interest which the king and your majesty take in that accusation, which, however, is too ill-founded to give me any uneasiness."

"But, after all," resumed the queen, "how many have you granted?"

"I cannot exactly tell," answered I; "but I should think about a hundred. This, however, I do know for certain, that of all I have granted, there is not a single one which I would not grant again to-morrow; because, in spite of all the noise raised by my accusers, every one of those permissions have been granted conformably to the existing laws."

"I am

"I am happy," answered she, "to see you in this perfect security: but be upon your guard against their secret malice, for your innocence will be no security against that."



PRIVATE MEMORANDUM

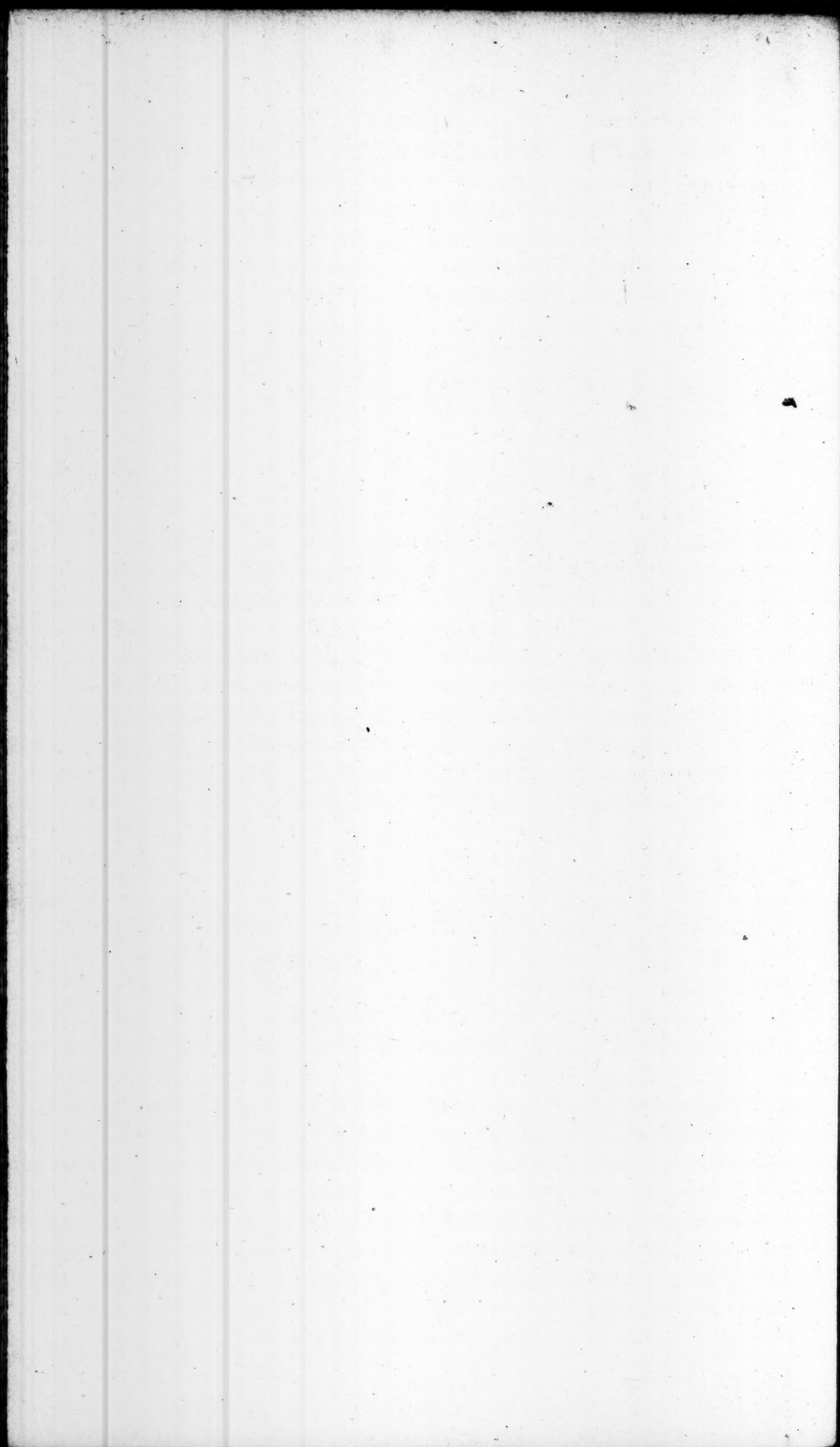
"I am happy," observed the President, "to see you in the midst of business; but I am afraid you must consult their secret majesty, for I am sure there will be no security against them."



LEWIS XVII

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CHAP. XVII.

Insulting letter from the president of the assembly to the king, which his majesty sends to the ministerial committee.—Letter written by me, upon this occasion, to the king.—Important measures are taken to form a royalist party in the assembly, which fail, through the indiscretion of M. de Narbonne.—A division in the council.—Its consequences,

THE assembly, seeing how much the ministers had lost credit by their conduct and by their want of unanimity, became every day more enterprising. Condorcet being named president about the beginning of February, was ordered by the assembly to write a letter to the king: but as the form in which the president was to address letters to the king had not been regulated by the constitution, after some discussion,

cussion, it was decreed that the president of the national assembly, in writing to the king, should lay aside the term *Sire*, and directly begin with the subject of the letter; and afterwards finish and sign it without any of the accustomed expressions of respect.

Condorcet wrote the letter according to the form prescribed, which, after being submitted to the assembly, was sent by one of the huissiers to the king. I was with him in his apartment when the letter was delivered. He appeared to be greatly shocked on reading it.

"Is it possible to carry insolence farther?" said he, presenting the letter to me. "It is from Condorcet."

After having read it, I observed, that if the letter had been addressed to a clerk of the assembly, it could not have been written in a less respectful stile *.

"I hope," added I, "that your majesty will not allow this insolence to pass unnoticed."

* *Vide* the Appendix, No. I.

"It

"It is rather too much to be entirely overlooked," answered the king. "But what measure is to be taken?"

"In your majesty's place, I would immediately send back the letter to the assembly. But I will not take upon me to give you this advice until I have reflected further upon it."

"Is not there to be a ministerial committee this evening?" resumed the king. "Go you to *M. le Garde des Sceaux*, and I shall send him the letter."

"I immediately went to the house of the *Garde des Sceaux*, and informed him and my colleagues, who were already there, of what had passed. Soon after the king sent Condorcet's letter; and they were all so much revolted upon reading it, that I expected they would advise the king to repel the insult in the strongest terms: but upon examining the different articles of the constitution, they found that the case in question had not been foreseen, and they therefore concluded that it would be most prudent for the king to make no answer to the letter,

which

which would sufficiently mark his displeasure.

On the contrary, my opinion was, that the silence of the constitution, on this head, only proved that it had never been doubted but that the respect, which had ever been considered as due to the king, was to be continued. But if they supposed that this silence authorized the slightest deviation from respect to his majesty, they might also suppose that it authorized the greatest enormities ; for nothing was said in the constitution against insulting or even murdering the king. That besides, the form of correspondence betwixt the king and the assembly being already fixed, namely, by presenting their decrees, or sending verbal messages by a deputation of the members, he had a right not to admit of any innovation which displeased him. That if they imagined there was any energy in the measure of not answering Condorcet's letter, they must acknowledge that it was an energy of a passive nature ; and that in the king's situation, such a kind of energy would

would prove as hurtful as real weakness, as it tended to shew that he was hurt, without having power to resent the injury.

These reflections determined me to write the following letter to the king, on the 8th of February 1792 :

“ Your majesty has been advised to take no notice of the president of the assembly’s letter. I, on the contrary, think, that tolerating this insult will draw on many others, much more serious in their consequences. It appears to me of the highest importance for your majesty to write immediately to the assembly. I send the copy of a letter ; and if your majesty approves of it, the ministers may be instantly summoned, and the letter communicated to them, in your own hand-writing. Mine ought not to appear.”

Copy of the Letter to the Assembly.

“ Gentlemen,

“ When the nation acknowledged me for its king, I was entrusted with the national dignity, which I cannot, in any circumstance,

cumstance, allow to be attacked. I therefore return the letter which the president sent me yesterday by an huissier. The constitution has fixed the form of correspondence betwixt the national assembly and the king. I ought not and I will not correspond with it in any other manner than by that form; namely, by messages. As for that respect which is due to me, I will rely on the sentiments which the French have always had for their kings *."

This measure appeared to his majesty too strong, and the negative energy of silence was preferred; consequently no answer was given to the letter of the president.

To augment the king's popularity was at all times the object of the ministers, but more particularly on those occasions when the assembly treated him with insolence; and the letter of Condorcet was the greatest outrage which his majesty had as yet received. He was advised to make a tour round the suburbs on horseback, to converse affably with the people, to visit the

* *Vide* the Appendix, No. II.

hospitals, and distribute alms. These acts of humanity, so much in unison with his character, gained him the applause of some people in the street, who cried *Vive le roi!* but no other advantage ensued.

The formation of their majesties' household, which the ministers had hitherto neglected, was now regarded as a measure of the utmost importance, particularly as they flattered themselves that the king would be prevailed upon only to admit persons of acknowledged patriotism; therefore the committee of ministers again took up this affair, and some of them proposed plans, and gave in lists of those whom they wished to have received into the household.

I informed the king, by the following letter, that the ministers were occupied on this subject:

"In the committee of yesterday, your majesty's household was one subject of discussion. A list has been made of thirty persons who are to be proposed. The farther consideration is deferred till Tuesday. The ancient almanack of Versailles, and

that of the court of London, are to be consulted.

“As my desire is to present your majesty with a plan for that purpose, and such a list as will be agreeable to you, I take the liberty of requesting that your majesty will let me know your wishes on both these points, and I shall use every means, in the committee, to promote them. This I will endeavour to do in such a manner as to prevent all suspicion of my having received such a mark of confidence; having no view but that of giving to your majesty a fresh proof of my respect and unlimited attachment*.”

The king sent me no answer to this letter: but when I went to the levee, the same day, he approached the window where I was standing, and while he seemed to be looking at what was passing in the court of the palace, he said, in a low voice, “I received your letter. Let them take their own course.”

I was at this time occupied with the *Garde des Sceaux* and M. de Lessart, in a

* *Vide* the Appendix, No. III.

measure of far greater importance. We were endeavouring to form, secretly, a royalist party in the assembly, and had already gained over eight or ten members of great influence in the *côté droit*; that is to say, among the moderate party; and it was only necessary to give them the means of influencing that party distinguished by the title of the *Independants*, or the undecided, who voted sometimes with the *Moderés*, and sometime with the *Enragés*, some of whom were supposed to have no other reason but to announce that they were to be bought, and would join the party who offered them the best terms. It was very well known, from the manner in which this assembly was composed, that there were few of the members who were not to be gained either by money, or the promise of places for their relations and friends. As the power of nominating to places belonged to each minister for his own department only, it was necessary to acquaint them all with this plan, in order that they might all concur in its execution. For this purpose, we all as-

sembled at the house of M. de Narbonne, who gave us a dinner, along with a certain person who was to be a principal agent in this business, as being intimately acquainted with many members of the assembly. That this dinner might be the more secret, we met at the *petite maison* of M. de Narbonne. After dinner, this person presented to us the proposals of the principal deputies, with whom he had already begun to treat, and the following articles were agreed upon:

First, That none of the said deputies were to have any personal communication with the ministers, but were only to negotiate with them through the above-mentioned agent.

Secondly, That they must never be required to propose or support any motion contrary to the constitution.

Thirdly, That as often as the king and council wished for their support for any particular measure, the said deputies must be informed twenty-four hours beforehand by the agent, through whom they would instruct

instruct the ministers with their objections, if they had any, and receive their answers.

Fourthly, That the means to be used for influencing the assembly must be left entirely to them ; that their demand as to this article admitted of no restriction.

The fund from which this expence was to be drawn, was, First, The sum of 1,500,000 livres, belonging to the department of foreign affairs, for secret expences, of which the minister for that department was not obliged to give an account to any body but to the king.

Secondly, From the free fund which certain ministers had at their disposal.

And, thirdly, From the civil list.

The conference broke up at ten o'clock at night. The ministers agreed, at parting, on the necessity of keeping this affair profoundly secret. Indeed the very nature of the case implied as much. Unfortunately, M. de Narbonne, just as he went from this meeting, met with Mathieu de Montmorenci, and a member of the assembly, who waited for him, as he entered the

Hotel de la Guerre, and informed them of what had passed. At half past eleven that same night, the news had spread in the assembly, which was still sitting. It was loudly complained of; the members concerned were enraged; and thus the affair completely failed.

The ministers were in the utmost surprise and consternation next day, on hearing this account. They were eager to have an explanation with M. de Narbonne, but he took care to avoid it that day, by not coming to the council till after it was begun, and hurrying out the instant it was over. However, he came to the committee of ministers next day, and upon being reproached for having divulged what had passed at the conference, he at first said that he did not remember having mentioned it: but when Mathieu de Montmorenci and the other member of the assembly were named to him, "Mathieu de Montmorenci," said he, "is my friend; and I am certain that he would not speak of it to any body. With regard to the member of the assembly, he is of

of our party, and consequently equally interested with us in keeping the secret."

"It is of very little consequence," answered the *Garde des Sceaux*, "which of them divulged it: but what cannot be denied is, that we all solemnly promised to mention it to nobody."

"That is true," returned M. de Narbonne; "and I was wrong. But in short, gentlemen, I have long perceived that we cannot act together; and I will even own to you, that if I knew of five persons proper to be proposed to the king in your places, I should immediately do it, and remain myself; because I think it would be of essential benefit to his majesty's service that I continued in administration. But as I cannot make this change, I am determined to resign."

"Your resignation, or ours, is not the affair in question," said the *Garde des Sceaux*. "We are perhaps as little attached to our places as you can be: but we are sensible, that, in the present circumstances, the least change in the council might be

fatal to the king. We therefore wish to continue to act with you ; and nothing will be easier, if you will fairly come to an understanding with us, and then adhere, without deviation, to what we have once agreed upon."

"No," replied M. de Narbonne, "that is impossible ; because there are some members in the council with whom I can never agree : for instance, M. de Bertrand."

"Me, Sir !" cried I, greatly astonished. "And upon what account ? What has happened to alter your opinion, since you made me so many protestations of esteem ? Is it my fault that you have been guilty of an indiscretion, which has been attended with very bad consequences ?"

"That is out of the question," said he. "But I see very well that we do not go upon the same plan. You refused me a frigate."

"I refuse you a frigate ! When did you ask for one ?" answered I.

"Don't you remember," replied he, "what you declared in the council, when I mentioned

mentioned the possibility of our having occasion for one, when we had under consideration the affair of M. de la Jaille, at Brest?"

"Was I to consider", said I, "an accidental observation, made by you at the time of that insurrection, as the official demand of a frigate? You appeared to have no other intention, in the question you then put to me, than to know if I would arm a frigate, to cruise along our coast, in the case of our apprehending hostile intentions in any of the maritime powers; and I answered, that I did not then know an officer to whom I would give such a command. If you had directly asked a frigate for yourself, I should have acquainted the king, and have done as he should have ordered."

This conversation was followed by some observations from the *Garde des Sceaux*, upon the necessity of maintaining, at least, the appearance of unanimity in the council: but the committee broke up, without M. de Narbonne having shewn any disposition to reconciliation, or to act in a friendly manner with the other ministers;
and

and the public were soon informed of the divisions in the council, which encouraged the malecontents to attack us ; and no time was lost. The *Garde des Sceaux* was denounced in the assembly. Another denunciation was announced against M. de Lef-fart ; and the memorial of complaint against me, which appeared to have been forgotten, being again revived, was given in to the king.

C H A P. XVIII.

Generals Rochambeau, la Fayette, and Luckner arrive at Paris.—Their conversation with the king.—They are introduced into the council.—M. de Narbonne absents himself from the ministerial committees.—M. de la Fayette comes to the committee.—Speaks of the ill consequences which must attend the misunderstanding among the ministers.—He proposes that I should retire from the administration.—My letter to M. de Narbonne respecting an article in Brissot's Journal.—A letter from each of the three generals to M. de Narbonne.

M. DE NARBONNE had summoned the three generals Rochambeau, Luckner, and la Fayette to Paris, upon pretence of making them give an account of the state of the armies, and of the plan of operations. They were introduced by M. de Narbonne into the council, on Friday
the

the 2d of March, in spite of the repugnance which the king had to so unusual a measure. Before the council opened, his majesty asked them several questions upon the state of the armies. M. de Rochambeau, who was first interrogated, answered, "that his army was in a very bad condition with respect both to clothing and arms; and as for discipline, it was almost entirely overthrown, and out of his power, in the present circumstances, to re-establish it; of course, that with such troops, all military operations must be of a defensive nature only."

General Luckner, who had probably drank a little freely at dinner, saw things in a much pleasanter point of view than his colleague.

"*Je dis pas votre majesté,*" said the general, addressing the king in his German French, "*qu'il y a pas aussi quelque petit chose à dire sur mon armée, qu'il manque pas aussi quelque petits obchets d'armement ou d'équipement; le discipline il n'est pas non plus trop bon; mais c'est égal; quand je commande*

commande les troupes, ils ont beaucoup d'ardeur, ils me suivront partout comme je veux, mais je suis pour le guerre offensif, c'est l'offensif qu'il faut pour les Français, ils sont pas pour le deffensif, l'offensif, votre majesté, l'offensif."*

M. de la Fayette being interrogated in his turn, answered in a few words; he contradicted neither of his colleagues; and, although their opinions were quite opposite, he contrived to accommodate what he said to both: after which, the king imagining that they would immediately retire, seemed pleased with the thought, that the impropriety of their sitting in the council was thus avoided; but when he bowed, in expectation of their withdrawing, they requested his permission to read a memorial,

* I do not pretend to deny that something of the same nature may not be said of my army, which are also in want of certain little articles respecting arms and clothing; and the discipline, to be sure, is not very strict; but that is of little consequence, for, when I command, the troops always display ardour, they follow me always as I wish; but I am for offensive war; the French troops excel in the attack; they are not fit for the defensive. Offensive war, please your majesty, offensive war for ever.

which

which appearing to be too long to be heard standing, his majesty seated himself, and desired the generals to do the same.

The memorial was of little or no consequence; and, when it was finished, he told the generals, that he would consider upon it, and they retired.

Next day M. de Narbonne did not appear in the committee of ministers; but his friend M. de la Fayette came in his place, and spoke much of the bad effect which the dissensions in the ministry had on the public mind, and of the fatal consequences they might produce to the king, &c. &c.

"You preach repentance," answered one of the ministers; "but is your friend M. de Narbonne of the same opinion?"

"Yes, undoubtedly he is."

"Why then does not he join his colleagues, after the desire which they shewed to be reconciled to him?"

"This was what I wished," returned M. de la Fayette; "but after what he informed me concerning what passed between him
and

and M. Bertrand, at the last committee, it seems almost impossible that one or other should not quit the ministry; and M. Bertrand must pardon me, if truth forces me to say, that however estimable his conduct may be, his retreat, in the present circumstances, would be as useful to the king, as that of M. de Narbonne would be fatal."

"Were I of that opinion," said I, "I should most certainly resign without hesitation; but I can with difficulty believe, that it would be advantageous to the king to be abandoned by one of his ministers, merely because some base calumniators have made complaints against him that are absurd, and without the smallest foundation. With regard to the attack which M. de Narbonne directed against me, in order to extricate himself, surely that does not entitle him to require my retreat; and, although I have a better right to insist on his, so far am I from making any such request, that I now join my colleagues in inviting him to a reconciliation: this ought

to satisfy him. You may assure him, at the same time, Sir," added I, "that notwithstanding his popularity, the term of my ministry shall never depend upon his caprice. I have long since acquainted his majesty with the particular time when I thought it would be necessary for me to quit his service—the period is at no great distance; but most assuredly I shall not hasten it a moment to please M. de Narbonne."

The other ministers approved of what I had said, and supported me in it; and M. de la Fayette retired, much dissatisfied at the bad success of his embassy.

The next day, being the 4th of March, 1792, the following article appeared in Brissot's Journal:

"The reports which have been for some time circulating, of dissensions in the cabinet council, are well founded—a misunderstanding subsists betwixt the minister of war and the minister of marine: the first, whose attachment to the constitution is well known, employs every means of executing

ing its laws, so as to render it successful; while the second endeavours to execute them in such a manner as to overturn it."

As soon as I saw this paragraph, I wrote the following letter to M. de Narbonne:

"SIR,

"I have just read a paragraph in the *Patriote Français*, which I make no doubt has shocked you as much as it has done me. Being convinced you had no share in it, I presume you are sensible of the propriety of immediately requiring that the paragraph may be retracted; which it will be easy for you to obtain."

M. de Narbonne's Answer.

"SIR,

"I felt as much uneasiness as you could on reading the paragraph you mention: in the inserting of which I certainly had no hand; but, as I am convinced, that the assertions it contains are true, I can neither contradict them, nor require that they should be retracted.

"I greatly esteem your talents and virtues; at the same time, I have had occasion to observe, that our ideas are not the same respecting the constitution; and it appears to me, that our different method of executing its laws, in such critical circumstances, must be as hurtful to public affairs as to the king's interest."

Notwithstanding this extraordinary answer, I wished to try every means of being reconciled with M. de Narbonne. His dismissal would have been the consequence of an open rupture; and, as he was then the most popular minister, this would have been hurtful to the king. The same day, therefore, on which I received this letter, finding myself seated next him at the council, I wrote the subsequent note, and showed it to M. de Narbonne.

"If M. de Narbonne has, as I wish, reflected more maturely upon the letter I sent him this morning, it depends upon himself to re-establish perfect unanimity in the council: he has only to complain of the article in the *Patriote Français*; to ex-

press before the council his surprise and uneasiness on account of its insertion, and to declare that he will immediately write to the editor to desire it may be retracted. I have not communicated the subject of this note to any of my colleagues; and I give my word of honour that I never will, in the hopes that the step which I recommend, may be regarded by them as the spontaneous effects of M. de Narbonne's candour, which will certainly reconcile them all to him."

M. de Narbonne, after reading this note, wrote the following answer under it:

"I persist in the same opinion, which I sent M. Bertrand this morning. He is at liberty to lay open immediately, before the king, all the circumstances regarding Brissot's paragraph. I am ready to explain myself upon that article."

I wrote back upon the same paper:

"Don't you think it would be more expedient to discuss this affair in the committee, after the council, before it is mentioned to the king?"

M. de Narbonne answered, by the single word, "willingly."

After the council, we went to the apartment in the palace appropriated for the committee. I gave an account of my letter, and M. de Narbonne's answer, concerning the paragraph inserted in Brissot's Journal, with which all the ministers had been very much offended. Then addressing myself to M. de Narbonne, I said,

"I now request, Sir, that you will frankly explain, before our colleagues, what you mean by the difference of opinion which, you say, subsists betwixt us concerning the constitution, and of our different mode of executing it. I ought, and I am convinced I do understand the constitution better than you do; because my department not being so much overcharged as your's, I have had more leisure to study it; I never take a step without consulting it; and I am very sure that it is not in your power to give a single instance wherein I have deviated from what the constitution prescribes."

"I con-

"I contest nothing of all that," replied M. de Narbonne; "but you ought, with the same frankness on your part, to acknowledge that you do *not like* the constitution; that you do not *approve of it*."

"No Sir," resumed I, "that is what I will not acknowledge; I will only declare that I do not allow myself to decide on the merits or demerits of the constitution. I shall defer passing my judgment until that of the nation is manifested, after having experienced the effects which will result from its execution. Neither you nor I have sworn to love it; at all events, we have only taken an oath to execute it faithfully, and to enforce it by all the means in our power: let us content ourselves with being faithful to our oath."

"Yes," replied he; "but while I use every means of making the constitution succeed, you endeavour to have it executed, in such a manner, as may prove to the nation that it never can go on."

"That is to say," returned I, "you *suppose* this to be my intention; for you certainly

have not the smallest proof of it; and I never made such a declaration to you, nor to any body else. Your supposition would be more plausible if I adhered with less strictness to the constitution; but it is strange to conclude, from my scrupulous observance of it, that my design is to shew the public that it cannot be executed: thus, Sir, it is impossible for me to escape your censure, let me act as I will. May I ask by what right you assert that I have a design so contradictory to my conduct; and can you seriously found your quarrel with me on such vague and inconsistent suppositions."

"I don't mean to quarrel with you," he answered; "but you desired me to explain myself openly: then I must plainly tell you, that I form my opinion in consequence of what I see: your department does not go on."

"My department does not go on! what do you know, Sir, upon the subject? what do you find deficient?"

"This,

"This, Sir ; that you have not commenced the new organization of the navy : you have not an officer ; not a captain of a frigate, while the land force is complete."

"It is true, Sir, that the new organization of the navy is not far advanced ; but it certainly is not my fault, as the assembly has not yet passed one of the decrees necessary to regulate this organization, although I have repeatedly demanded them ; and as I have no right to issue such decrees, nor the power of executing them before they exist, I deserve no blame on that head : indeed I have never been blamed on that account by the assembly, notwithstanding the prevailing prejudice against me. If I had been as fortunate as you were," continued I, "in having all my decrees immediately passed, perhaps I should have been as far advanced ; particularly if I had supplied the place of officers by pilots and sailors, as you supplied the officers who were missing by serjeants and common soldiers ; perhaps I might have also had *my* Luckner to boast of ; for the famous corsaire Paul

Jones presented himself twice at my levee to demand the rank of Admiral."

"Well, well," said M. de Narbonne, "you see what a footing you are on with the assembly: you can obtain nothing, while nothing I ask is refused me: It is true, that I frequently attend the assembly, and go almost every day to the committees. If you had pursued the same plan, you would undoubtedly have had the same success; but you never would have any communication with the committees: this singularity gave offence; and I am not surprised that it has raised you many enemies in the assembly."

"I am not surprised at it neither," said I; "but notwithstanding the success which you owe to your communication with the committees, I persist in the opinion, that these communications are much more dangerous than useful. But, in short, Sir, this is foreign to the question; for certainly it is not for my persisting in communicating with the assembly only, and refusing to attend the committees, that you suppose me
to

to have an intention of subverting that very constitution which orders us to communicate directly with the assembly, and says nothing of committees."

"In short, it is to no purpose," resumed he, "to prolong this dispute, as we may go on till to-morrow without coming to any agreement. What has passed, only proves that our principles are too opposite ever to be reconciled ; and this consideration would have determined me to retire from administration, as I informed you at the house of the *Garde des Sceaux*, if I had not been restrained by the intreaties of the generals."

"You will act as you please, Sir," replied I:

All the ministers were struck with the futility of M. de Narbonne's objections, and the force of my answers. They expostulated with M. de Narbonne, and endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation ; but all in vain. He stood out with the obstinacy of a person who had a fixed plan, from which he was determined not to recede. This conduct of M. de Narbonne,

Narbonne, at first appeared inconsistent with the intention he had announced, of giving in his resignation, but it became a little more intelligible three days after, by the extraordinary measure he adopted of publishing in the newspapers three letters he had received from the generals Rochambeau, Luckner, and la Fayette, with his answers.

Those letters had been written at the request of M. de Narbonne himself; they were all three to the same effect, and very nearly in the same words. The substance was as follows:

“ That the report of his retreat gave them the greatest uneasiness: that it was his duty to remain in administration, as his talents, activity, and resources were so useful to his country. That their confidence in him, and the certitude of obtaining, through his diligence, all necessary succour, had been their only motive for retaining the command of the armies; but that, if he persisted in his determination to retire, they must give up a situation, the duties

duties of which, they would no longer have the power properly to discharge."

M. de Narbonne's answer was conceived in nearly the subsequent terms :

" It is true, my dear general, that the difference of opinion which subsists betwixt M. Bertrand and me, respecting the constitution, had determined me to give in my resignation ; but the value you attach to my services, and your earnest desire for my continuance in administration, make me consider it as a duty to remain as long as the king honours me with his confidence."

The publication of these letters, opened the eyes of the three generals, who had probably written them unknown to each other ; and each in the hope, that his personal approbation would have sufficient weight with the king, to fix M. de Narbonne in administration. They now began to suspect that he had summoned them to Paris, and loaded them with civilities, merely with a view to induce them to take this step ; which was the more remarkable,

as

as at that time attempts were made to turn him into ridicule by numerous pamphlets and caricatures, in which he was distinguished by the nick name of *Ministre Linote* *.

M. de Narbonne had flattered himself, that the publication of this correspondence would confirm his credit in the assembly, and put the king under the necessity of retaining him in the administration, lest his retiring should occasion that of all the three generals; but the event did not answer his expectation; for those gentlemen were so much offended at the publication of their letters, that they complained of it to his majesty; and retracted their declaration of having a design to retire upon his resignation.

* Linnet.

CHAP. XIX.

The ministers assemble to examine the conduct of M. de Narbonne.—They unanimously agree never more to sit in the council with him.—My resignation.—Letter from M. de Lessart to the king.—My conversation with his majesty.—Dismission of M. de Narbonne.—Violent discontents in the assembly.—Decree against M. de Lessart.—Death of the Emperor.—The Chevalier de Graves appointed minister of war.

THE conduct of M. de Narbonne raised the indignation of all the ministers; and the day on which his correspondence with the three generals was made public, they met in committee to deliberate on the part to be taken respecting him. It was unanimously decided, in the first place, that none of the ministers should any longer do business with M. de Narbonne, and therefore it became necessary that the king

king should immediately decide betwixt him and us. But as the dismissal of M. de Narbonne, in consequence of a quarrel, which seemed to have arisen from his zeal for the constitution, might set the king and council in an unfavourable light in the eyes of the public, we considered every possible means of obviating this inconvenience, and my resignation was considered as the most eligible. I opposed this decision, for two reasons. The first was, that I thought it disgraceful for me to retire, before his majesty had given any answer to the assembly respecting the memorial addressed to him against me, because my retreat might be construed into a tacit acknowledgement of the justice of the imputations it contained. In the second place, I earnestly wished to continue in administration till the 15th of March, because that day was fixed upon for the review of the new *corps de la marine*, or rather for the disorganization of the former corps, and therefore I had fixed upon it as the termination of my administration; and I urged that

that the king could not in justice, nor the council in honour, hasten it a day sooner, as it would be giving M. de Narbonne the satisfaction of including me in his fall, and expose me to a mortification I had not merited.

These considerations made no impression on M. Cayer de Gerville. He had first proposed my resignation, and he obstinately insisted upon it; and declared with great violence, that he would give in his the very next day if I did not give in mine. This menace frightened the *Garde des Sceaux*, who had, till then, warmly espoused my cause; and I also became sensible, that at an instant so critical, the popularity of M. Cayer de Gerville would render his retreat more prejudicial to the king than mine. I therefore no longer insisted, but consented to give in my resignation, provided it was not made public till after the king sent an answer to the memorial which the assembly had drawn up against me; which could be done early next morning, if the *Garde des Sceaux*, when he waited upon his majesty

jeſty with the requeſt of the committee, would beg of him to let me have the memorial immediately, in order that I might draw up the ſketch of an answer before the opening of the aſſembly.

This condeſcendance obviated all difficulties, and gave ſuch ſatisfaction to M. Cayer de Gerville, that he ſuggeſted to propoſe to the king that I ſhould continue in office after giving in my reſignation, until my ſucceſſor was appointed. By this means all my views were answered. I was certain that the king would make no objection. I accordingly wrote my reſignation, while my colleagues were employed in drawing up the answer which the king was to make me; and they endeavoured to render it as honourable for me as poſſible. It was agreed upon that the *Garde des Sceaux* ſhould next morning, preſent my reſignation, and the form of the answer, as drawn up by the miniſters for his majeſty. It was agreed alſo that M. de Leſſart ſhould that evening, after the committee, write to him an account of what had paſſed. The following is a copy

of that interesting letter, which renders it superfluous for me to give a circumstantial detail of what passed at the committee, especially as the testimony of a third person will have more weight than my own.

“ I went this evening, betwixt ten and eleven o'clock, to the house of the minister of justice, which I informed your majesty was my intention, and there I not only found M. Bertrand and M. Tarbé, but also M. Cayer ; and soon after M. de la Fayette arrived, whom the *Garde des Sceaux* had already seen in the course of the day.

“ M. de la Fayette told us that he had been very desirous of bringing about a reconciliation amongst the ministers ; that this had at all times appeared difficult to him, upon account of the difference subsisting betwixt M. de Narbonne and M. Bertrand ; but that now things had come to that point, that he could no longer interfere : he gave as his reason the publication of the three letters from the generals, and, above all, the answer which M. de Narbonne had given to him. He declared

that he had never consented to the publication, nor had he any idea of such a thing till he saw the letters in the newspapers. After this explanation, which was cold and laconic, he retired. The moment he went out, M. Cayer vented his indignation at the conduct of M. de Narbonne, in the strongest expressions; and he ended by saying that he must never more set his foot in the council. But at the same time he added, that the dismissal of M. de Narbonne might produce very bad consequences, unless the voluntary resignation of M. Bertrand followed soon after.

"M. Bertrand said that he could not, at that moment, give in his resignation, but that he would do it most willingly after the 15th of March; that such had always been his fixed intention.

"The *Garde des Sceaux* supported M. Bertrand, and said that it would be beneath the king's dignity, and the credit of the ministry, to yield upon such an occasion.

"M. de Cayer insisted, with force, upon M. Bertrand's immediate resignation. He founded

founded his opinion upon the present disposition of the people, the public interest, and that of the king.

“He was seconded by M. Tarbé in such a manner, that M. Bertrand condescended so far as to promise to give in his dismissal as soon as the king should have answered the memorial of the national assembly.

“M. Cayer insisted on his former opinion with great vehemence, declaring, that if M. Bertrand did not give in his resignation immediately after the king had demanded that of M. de Narbonne, he himself would resign, the very next morning.

“I had, till then, taken little part in the debate, being, at bottom, entirely of the opinion of M. Cayer de Gerville, which I had hitherto concealéd, out of delicacy to M. Bertrand, whose situation was extremely cruel : but seeing things so far advanced, I at last remarked to M. Bertrand, that as he was resolved upon the sacrifice, he ought to make it in the manner most advantageous for the king, in the present state

of public affairs ; and that it appeared highly expedient that he should give in his resignation next day, in order to diminish the effect which M. de Narbonne's dismissal might produce.

“ M. le *Garde des Sceaux*, who had been greatly struck with the decisive declaration of M. de Gerville, being sensible of the importance of preventing his resignation on the same day with M. de Narbonne, ranged himself on the same side.

“ M. Bertrand consented ; and we drew up the letter which is proposed for your majesty to send in answer to his letter of resignation.

“ This long and important discussion passed without acrimony, and in a manner becoming persons who have sentiments of mutual esteem. Your majesty's interest and the public good were all we had in view.

“ In the proposed answer from your majesty to M. Bertrand, you will require of him to remain in his department till a successor is appointed.

“ With respect to M. de Narbonne, we think he ought immediately to be replaced ; and that it is even of consequence that his successor take his place in council this very evening. Upon mature consideration, it appeared to us that the Chevalier de Graves is the most proper person to replace him ; and on the presumption that he would be agreeable to your majesty, the *Garde des Sceaux* founded him yesterday ; and during the committee, he went again to his house at one o'clock in the morning, with the same intention ; but not finding him at home, left a note, desiring to see him as early as possible.

“ We also think it very necessary that your majesty should immediately send for the three generals, in order to prevent them from giving in their resignation, which they will most certainly be excited to do by every possible means. Your majesty will not fail in persuasive arguments. On their part, it would certainly be a failure in their duty, and even a breach of their oath, to resign at such a conjuncture. But as this

is a point of the utmost importance, your majesty will perhaps think it expedient that the queen should be present at this interview, that every circumstance may concur to ensure success.

There are also precautions to be taken relative to the national guards, as it is very possible that seditious people may take advantage of the present circumstances to excite disorder.

It is said that M. de Boissieu is not at Paris. By whom is he replaced? Might he not be sent for?

Your majesty will be informed of these particulars, in the morning, by the *Garde des Sceaux*. It appeared to us proper to give him the preference upon this occasion, as being the most ancient minister, and in some respects the chief of the council.

Your majesty may then send for M. Cayer de Gerville, to inform him that you have adopted his opinion; and at the same time to request him to continue in administration beyond the time he has fixed,

which is the 15th of this month. It is to be wished that his resignation could be deferred at least eight days beyond that period. It would be well if the queen would join her invitation to M. de Gerville to that of your majesty, by which means success would be more certain.

"Your majesty and the queen ought to shew every mark of favour and regard to M. Bertrand, so unjustly sacrificed; and who, in yielding to the force of circumstances, gives the strongest proof of attachment and duty. He is a man of merit, who must not be looked upon as entirely lost to your majesty's service.

"I shall end by observing, that the conduct of M. de Narbonne is so seriously reprehensible, that his dismissal seems absolutely necessary, unless your majesty prefers giving him your *entire* confidence. But in case you should adopt the first of these measures, no time is to be lost. All explanation will be superfluous, and derogate from your dignity. It is even of consequence to prevent M. de Narbonne from

coming to the council this evening, as he will not fail to bring a very patriotic discourse, which he will propose that your majesty should address to the national assembly; and, if he receives his dismissal next day, he will say that it is upon account of this discourse that he has fallen into disgrace.

“ I take the liberty to remind your majesty of the three generals. It appears to me that you should see them; that you should receive them all three together; and, if possible, before any of them have been tampered with. In talking of their letters, your majesty, without informing them of your intentions, may ask them, If, after swearing to be faithful to the nation and the king, they can seriously determine to serve no longer than M. de Narbonne remains in administration? Your majesty may add, that even supposing that some alteration should be made in the ministry, you will certainly choose none but men distinguished for patriotism and abilities.

“ Friday morning, 5 o'clock *.”

* *Vide* Appendix, No. IV.

On

On leaving the committee, (about three in the morning,) I immediately sent a copy of my resignation to the editor of the *Journal de Paris*, earnestly requesting him to insert it in that day's paper; in order that the retreat of the minister, who displeased the assembly, might be made public at the same time with the dismissal of him who had more partisans in it, a circumstance, however, that did not prevent him from being sometimes insulted, which never happened to me.

To give an idea of the manner in which M. de Narbonne was sometimes treated in that hall, I shall only relate the words which the deputy Albitte addressed to him at the evening meeting a little before his dismissal:

"That great minister," cried the deputy, "whom you behold there, who has such vast talents, and whose numerous applauders besiege the assembly and the committees, often makes reports entirely devoid of truth. As for his activity, so much vaunted,
it

it is of as little utility as the activity of one who walks in his sleep."

M. de Narbonne heard this rhetorical flourish with a smile of contempt, which was the only reply he ever made to those indecent attacks, for which a less enduring minister would have obliged the assembly to have done him justice.

I had not seen the memorial which the assembly had addressed to the king against me; but as it could contain little else besides a repetition of the former reports made by the marine committee, I prepared a form of the answer the king was to make, all but a refutation of the new accusations which the memorial might contain. I therefore addressed a letter to his majesty, begging that he would send me the memorial, and informing him that my resignation was to be presented to him.

My letter was as follows:

"I entreat your majesty will send me the memorial of accusation against me, as it ought to be answered as soon as possible.

fible. The ministers, assembled last night in committee, deliberated till three in the morning upon the letters which M. de Narbonne caused to be printed in every journal. His conduct being highly disapproved of by all, they intend to propose that your majesty should dismiss him; but, as the dangerous woman who governs him might take advantage of the present crisis, to excite an insurrection, on pretence that a patriotic minister is dismissed for having denounced an aristocratic one, my unbounded attachment to your majesty, and regard for your interest, have determined me to give in my resignation as soon as M. de Narbonne has received his dismissal. But I shall ever remain inviolably devoted to your majesty's service; and my chief ambition will ever be, to have it in my power to prove my respectful attachment *."

The king received this letter an hour before the *Garde des Sceaux* went to him from the committee.

* *Vide* Appendix, No. V.

At ten o'clock I received two letters from his majesty : one was that which the committee had drawn up, in which the king, while he accepted of my resignation, exacted that I should continue the functions of my office until my successor should be appointed. The other letter was entirely from himself, full of expressions of kindness, and in the true style of Henry the Fourth. I would wish to transcribe it entirely ; but I valued it too highly to run the risk of losing it in my flight ; it remains at Paris, with several other letters from the king and queen : the box which contains them is buried six feet underground in a garden. I hope that this precious deposit will be one day restored to me, or at least that it will not be lost to my children. In the mean time, I must content myself with only transcribing part of his majesty's letter, which is deeply engraven in my heart.

“ I am sorry that circumstances oblige you to give in your resignation : from what I have learned, I believe you acted wisely ; but I do not feel the less regret. I
had

had determined to exert myself in supporting you ; but that absurd man has brought things to such a pass that it seems impossible. I hope your services will not be always lost to me and to the state ; I may, one day, perhaps, be in a situation to derive advantage from them *."

The person who brought this packet, desired me to go to the king as soon as possible.

I waited upon his majesty before I had recovered the emotion occasioned by his letter ; and he received me with an air of sadness, which so thoroughly overcame me, that I burst into tears. He turned away to the window, where he remained some time silent, to give me time to compose myself ; then approaching me with a look of kindness :

* " Je suis bien fâché que les circonstances vous aient forcé de donner notre démission ; ce que j'apprends me prouve qu'en effet vous avez prit le bon parti ; je n'en ai pas moins de regret. J'étois bien résolu à déployer tout l'énergie possible pour vous soutenir ; mais ce diable d'homme a tellement tout brouillé qu'on n'y connoit plus rien.—J'espère que vos services ne seront pas perdus pour moi ni pour l'état, et je compte bien les retrouver un jour."

" You

"You always wished," said he, "to give in your resignation on the 15th of this month. You shall continue in your department, at least, till then; and we must see next what can be done. Have you seen the *Garde des Sceaux*?"

"No, sire," answered I.

"I thought he had gone to tell you of Narbonne's dismissal. He said, when he parted from me, that he was going to your house."

"He probably went directly," answered I, "with your majesty's orders to M. de Narbonne."

"Not at all," answered the king. "I sent them by a footman. There, read the letter I wrote to him; it is not long."

The letter contained these few words:

"I hereby inform you, sir, that I have appointed M. de Grave to the war department; you will therefore give him access to the papers belonging to your office."

* "Je vous prévins, monsieur, que je viens de nommer M. de Graves au département de la guerre; vous lui remettrez votre portefeuille."

"I have

“I have not sent you the memorial of the assembly,” resumed the king, “because I wished to answer it immediately. It contains nothing new, and was even very ill written; so that the answer was not difficult.”

“I am sorry,” said I, “that your majesty has taken so much trouble. I have been employed in drawing up an answer, which I have brought to shew your majesty.”

“That is much too long,” said the king, when he saw four pages of writing, “and therefore useless. Mine is ten times shorter. See if it won’t do much better.”

“Perfectly well, sire,” said I, after having read it. “I would not change a word.”

“I am glad,” answered he, “that you approve. Go, then, to the *Garde des Sceaux*, to have it copied in his office; and after I have signed it, he will countersign it, and send it to the assembly.”

This answer was, in substance, as follows:

“That the king did not find an article of accusation, in the memorial addressed to him

him against me, that had not been included in the former accusations, which the assembly had rejected by passing to the order of the day; and that therefore having no reason to adopt a different opinion of me from what the assembly entertained, he did not think proper to withdraw his confidence from me *."

I had this letter expedited for the assembly with all possible diligence, and it was sent at the moment when the unexpected news was received of M. de Narbonne's dismissal. Most unfortunately my resignation was not then known, having been sent too late to be inserted in the newspapers of that day; and no more was requisite to inflame the Brissotines, the Girondists, and the whole *Côté Gauche* of the assembly. At that very sitting, Brissot, availing himself of the present disposition of the assembly, made a furious declamation against M. de Lessart, which produced

* *Vide* Appendix, No. VI.

a decree of accusation against that minister.

Without giving him time to make his defence, or examining into the truth of any of the accusations so suddenly brought forth against him, this unfortunate and honest man was, in consequence of this decree, conducted to the national court established at Orleans. After remaining six months in the prison of that court, without being brought to trial, he was transferred to Versailles, the September following, by a detachment from Paris, and there massacred with the other prisoners.

In addition to the king's sorrow on account of the afflictive events of this day, particularly the unjust accusation of M. de Lessart, a courier arrived the same evening from Vienna, who brought intelligence of the death of the emperor Léopold.

The Chevalier de Graves, now appointed minister of war, took his place in the council that day. His manners, although popular, were not of the ostentatious, ca-

ressing nature of those that distinguished M. de Narbonne, but his conduct and writings since the revolution, and his attending the popular assemblies in the different towns where he happened to be with his regiment, made him pass for a zealous constitutionalist amongst the Jacobins, and for an enraged Jacobin amongst the Aristocrats; therefore his nomination did not hurt the king's popularity. In fact, the chevalier was neither a zealous constitutionalist nor a Jacobin; but he was, what many well-meaning people in France were at that time, misled by the attraction of new systems, by personal discontent, or by views of ambition. People of this description had formed a little system of reformation suitable to their own fancies and situations; and as long as they had hopes that their own plans would be adopted, all was well. In the progress of the revolution, however, they became alarmed, and heartily regretted that they had ever assisted it in the smallest degree: but being unwilling to retract, partly

partly from shame, and partly from fear, they yielded to the torrent.

Whatever were the motives which actuated M. de Graves, before he came into the council, he certainly shewed great attachment to the king, during his short administration; which would have been still shorter, had not his majesty for some time refused to accept of his resignation.

If the royalists had placed more confidence in him, he would certainly have served them as far as was consistent with the timidity of his character.

The king was reduced to the fatal necessity of forming a new ministry at a time when he had not the power of appointing a single individual in whom he could place confidence. Sensible of the dangers which surrounded him, he now shewed evident anxiety about his situation. Instead of the contempt and indifference with which he had supported the outrages which he had hitherto been exposed to, sorrow and consternation were strongly marked on his

countenance during that sad council of the 9th of March, which was the last at which I was present; and from which I retired, my heart impressed with the deepest melancholy.

CHAP. XX.

An impertinent letter which I received from M. Cayer de Gerville.—My explanation with him, and its consequences.—M. Lacoste called to the ministry.—His character.—M. Duport de Tertre, Cayer de Gerville, and Tarbé, their characters and dismissal.—Dumourier called by M. de Lessart.—Supplants him.—Character of M. de Lessart.

WE were all sincerely vexed at the decree of accusation issued against M. de Lessart; but M. Cayer de Gerville, always carried away by his violent and suspicious temper, took it into his head that I was the voluntary cause of this misfortune, and that I had prevented my dismissal from appearing in the Journal of the 9th of March. I did not give myself the trouble to combat his notion, as I hoped he

would become sensible of its injustice, upon cool reflection : but I found, by the receipt of the following note, a few days after, that he still continued in the same disposition of mind :

"SIR,

"After what has passed, you ought no longer to attend the council ; and I give you notice, that if you appear there this evening, I shall immediately leave it."

I knew him to be very capable of this act of intemperance, and even of giving in his resignation, on this pretext, with a patriotic ostentation, which might have injured the king's affairs. This consideration hindered me from taking any notice of the rudeness of M. de Gerville's note, which, being dictated by a man blinded by passion, did not merit the attention of a reasonable person.

I carried my moderation to the length of even going to his house, in order to find out if he had not a more reasonable motive for his intemperate behaviour than I had supposed.

supposed. My appearance rather surpris'd him.

"You seem not to have expected this visit, sir," said I, smiling.

"I acknowledge I did not," answered he: "but I had no doubt of your being offended; and since you are come, I am willing to give you what satisfaction you please."

"You imagine, perhaps," said I, "that I am come with an intention to challenge you?"

"If it be so," replied he, "I am at your commands."

"Explain to me, in the first place, sir," said I, "what your motive was for writing to me in such an imperious stile."

"Because I have been informed," replied he, "that the answer given by the king to your letter of resignation, has had a very bad effect, particularly his order for your continuing your functions; and such is the temper of the people on that subject, that if you were again to appear at the council, I

should not be surpris'd to see it the cause of an insurrection."

"Your reason is very good," said I: "but you might have given it in two words, without putting yourself in a passion."

"You know my impetuosity," rejoined he, "and also that I was extremely out of humour at your conduct with regard to poor de Lessart. What, in the devil's name, could you mean by your unwillingness to have your resignation made public at the same time with Narbonne's? I foresaw what would be the consequence; and you appeared, at one time, to have come over to our opinion: what could make you change your mind?"

"And who told you," answered I, "that I changed my mind? On the contrary, I sent a copy of my resignation to the writer of the Paris Journal, and desired him to insert it in his paper. What could I do more?"

"You

"You certainly were too late in sending it," replied he.

"We went," resumed I, "from the committee at three o'clock, and the journalist received my packet before four. Here is his answer, informing me that I was too late, as his Journal was already printed."

"You ought," said he, "to have stopped the publication, and have caused another edition to be printed, with your resignation."

"Yes," replied I; "but I did not receive his answer till nine o'clock in the morning."

"Ah! in that case I am in the wrong: but I advise you not to go this evening to the council."

"I am of your opinion," I answered; "and I am going to give the king notice, that he may not be surpris'd at my absence."

I accordingly went to the king immediately, and gave him an account of what had pass'd. His majesty approved of my conduct, and observed, with some truth,
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that it was lucky my temper was less violent than M. Cayer de Gerville's.

Lacoste, formerly first clerk of the marine in the department of the colonies, and afterwards sent, in quality of the king's commissary, to establish the new constitution in the Isles du Vent, succeeded me in the marine department. His dispute with M. de Behague, relative to their respective powers, was the cause of his being recalled into France. His denunciations against that governor, in the assembly and in the club of Jacobins, where he went upon his first arrival, and his low birth, gave to his nomination all the popularity which the circumstances required. This man, so violent in his temper, and coarse in his manners, ought never to have been raised from the sphere in which he had before passed his life, as it was most certainly *that* in which he seemed best fitted to act. Like others of his rank, the circumstance which he most admired in the revolution was, that it cleared the way to the first offices of the state to all, without any other

other distinction than those of talents and of virtue ; two qualities in which few men are sensible of a deficiency. His attachment to the Jacobins, or rather his desire to preserve their good graces, led him into the indecent absurdity of placing a pike in his hall, with a red cap upon it : but, with all that was faulty or ridiculous in his manners, Lacoste was, at bottom, an honest man : he detested the cruelties of the revolution ; he always behaved respectfully to the king, and gave his majesty some proofs of attachment which required courage.

The three ministers who remained in place from the 9th of March, were M. Tarbé, minister of finance ; Cayer de Ger-ville, minister of the home department ; and M. Duport du Tertre, *Garde des Sceaux*, who, after the decree of accusation against M. de Lessart, was entrusted with the business of the foreign department till another minister should be appointed.

M. Duport du Tertre, whom the revolution had raised from the situation of clerk,

clerk, with a salary of twelve hundred livres, to the first dignity in the kingdom, was, from the beginning, and with good reason, the zealous partisan of a revolution which had been so advantageous to him. M. de la Fayette, by whose influence he had been appointed minister, and all that part of the first assembly which went by the name of *Côté Gauche*, placed great confidence in him. Even after the dissolution of that assembly, he continued in intimacy with some of the principal persons who had composed it; namely, the Lameths, Barnave, and Adrian du Port, who were every day at his house: he did nothing without consulting them.

The constitutionalists who formed the *Côté Gauche* * of the first assembly, became the *Côté Droit* of the second, in which the *Côté Gauche* was composed of the most violent Jacobins, who aimed at the overthrow of monarchy, constitutional or not; and

* *Côté Gauche* and *Côté Droit* were names given to the two parties in the assembly; the second denoting the supporters of government, the first the opposition.

there-

therefore attacked, with equal fury, the constitutional ministers, and those whom they suspected of being attached to the ancient government. On this account M. Duport du Tertre had nearly as many enemies in the assembly as myself. He was obliged to give in his resignation a week after my retreat, in spite of all his efforts to support the constitution, to which he was more attached by gratitude than by esteem. Messrs. Tarbé and Cayer de Gerville were obliged to do the same, because they had adopted the fatal idea, that a ministry entirely composed of Jacobins, was the only one which was proper for that period; and they persuaded the king and queen of this.

My nomination to the marine department had given great uneasiness to M. Duport du Tertre, who has since owned to me, that he looked upon me with an evil eye for some time, as he was convinced that I had only accepted of the marine department as a step to the chancellorship. But he became one of my most zealous parti-

partisans when he found that it was not from ambition that I entered administration; and, that so far from desiring the place of any of my colleagues, I only thought of disengaging myself from my own as soon as I could with honour.

Tarbé, formerly a clerk of the finances, was an intelligent, active, laborious, honest man, and entirely devoted to the king: he might have kept his place in administration, with the consent of all parties, as he had never taken a step, or uttered an expression which could possibly give offence to any one. He had no great talents for speaking, and drew up papers but indifferently; but he was mild, modest, and polite. He seemed much more impressed with the recollection of what he had been, than elated by the situation he had risen to, and was no way anxious to impress others with the idea of his own importance. Entirely occupied with the duties of his office, which he was thought to be more capable of discharging than any other, it would have been fortunate that he had

continued in office; because, in so doing, he would have rendered the king the essential service of keeping out Claviere, who afterwards proved one of the most wicked and dangerous men of the revolution.

Cayer de Gerville was in his heart a republican; he detested and despised kings; and equally abhorred priests of all denominations, whom he accused of having, in all ages, been the apostles of falsehood, the propagators of fanaticism, and the promoters of civil wars and persecution.

"I wish from my soul," said he one day to us, coming out of the council, "that I could hold betwixt my finger and thumb that cursed race of vermin, and annihilate them with one crack."

Notwithstanding this strange speech, he shewed no propensity to cruelty in his actions: but he might really be considered as a very hot-headed man. In his opinion, the constitution had one very great fault; namely, that it retained something of monarchy; but, as he had sworn to ob-
serve

serve it, he was scrupulously faithful to his oath.

He was a member of the municipality of Paris; and the exercise of municipal sovereignty over-heated his naturally ardent brain: *the people* was his incessant theme; and he declaimed, with peculiar violence and volubility, against aristocracy, nobility, emigration, and priests. He saw every where, but particularly at court, treasons, plots, conspiracies: in a word, he possessed all the characteristics of a stern republican; and, in this quality, enjoyed great popularity.

Soon after he entered the ministry, he did justice to the king's good qualities; and became so sensible of that prince's probity, the rectitude of his intentions, his moderation, and humanity, that he almost forgave him for being a king. The only fault he found in him, was his attachment to the Catholic faith, and to non-constitutional priests. But Cayer de Gerville's opinion of the queen was far from being so
advan-

advantageous; he looked upon her as a haughty, perfidious, and wicked woman, who thought of nothing but of re-establishing despotism; and his idea of her majesty was such, that when the ministerial committee was held in the palace, he never would speak with freedom, from a notion that the queen, or some of her spies, listened at the door, or behind the wainscot: the smallest noise was sufficient to confirm him in his suspicions, and prevent his uttering another syllable during the whole time of the committee.

He was one day extremely offended by an answer which the king inattentively made him in the old regal style, which was now exploded. M. Cayer de Gerville had spontaneously undertaken a very laborious piece of business, merely in the view of being useful to his majesty. After the council, he came and gave an account of it: on which the king said, "*I permit you, sir, to present your memorial to me.*"

The minister was so much shocked with this answer, that he took up his pocket-

hook, and abruptly left the king, without saying a single word. He came immediately to pour forth his bad humour in the committee ; and, after telling his colleagues what had just passed, he continued to repeat with indignation : “ *I permit you to render me an essential service ; a pleasant manner indeed of thanking a man ! If I had had the memorial in my hands, I would have thrown it into the fire. However, he shall never set eyes on it.*”

The minister’s insolence had not escaped the king ; but he was forced to bear with this, as with the other marks of disrespect which he daily received. Two days after, his majesty desired Cayer de Gerville to bring him the memorial : he did this in such an obliging accent and manner, as entirely to overcome the minister’s anger. He immediately brought the memorial ; and the king was again reinstated in his good graces.

Upon another occasion, he treated Madame Elizabeth with great rudeness. This virtuous princess, whose life was dedicated

to piety and benevolence, had continual applications from the unfortunate. An unhappy nun had been particularly recommended to her protection; she desired to see Cayer de Gerville before he went to the council, intending to speak to him in favour of the nun. He waited upon the princess; but, before she had finished what she had to say, interrupting her abruptly, he said, "It is astonishing, madam, that you set so little value upon the time of a minister, as to make him lose half an hour in hearing the history of a nun: I have other business on my hands than the affairs of nuns; and you will forgive me, madam, when I tell you frankly, that I shall give myself as little trouble about this one as about others."

The mild princess, whose ears had never been wounded by so harsh an expostulation, was so much shocked and confounded, that she suffered the minister to leave the apartment without attempting to reply.

Cayer de Gerville, finding that the popularity of the ministry daily decreased, saw no other means of retaining the little

he still possessed personally, but that of giving in his resignation. His retreat was followed by that of the *Garde des Sceaux*, who, having been chiefly supported by Cayer de Gerville's friendship and popularity, did not choose to remain alone exposed to the attacks of his enemies, whose number every day augmented. He therefore announced, that he would give in his resignation as soon as the accusation against him was examined into.

This determination, which his friends took care to spread, accelerated the bringing of this business before the assembly; the accusation was rejected, which, as his enemies observed, was rearing a golden bridge for his escape.

A month after he was elected, by a great majority of votes, *Accusateur Public* of the criminal tribunal, in place of Robespierre, who resigned the office without having ever fulfilled its functions. The conduct of this monster has but too well shewn, that humanity was not his motive; the power of accusing was no satisfaction,

unless he had also the power of destroying his victims.

Messrs. Duport du Tertre, Tarbé, and Cayer de Gerville, all gave in their resignations between the 15th and 20th of March.

The new ministry was composed of M. Duranthon for the department of justice, M. de Graves for that of war, De la Coste for the marine, de Claviere for that of the finances, and Dumourier for foreign affairs. The last, a month before his nomination, was at Niort, where he had been forced to take refuge from his creditors. M. de Lessart being informed that he was the intimate friend of Genfonné, imagined that Dumourier's good offices might be of service to him with this deputy, who was a member of the diplomatic committee, and one of M. de Lessart's most inveterate persecutors. In this hope, he wrote a ministerial letter to Dumourier, who had long solicited an employment in the diplomatic line, and desired him to come immediately to Paris, where he would be informed of

the king's intentions ; and, at the same time, sent six thousand livres to enable him to clear off the debts which he might have contracted in Poitou.

Dumourier hastened to Paris, not doubting but the situation of minister plenipotentiary, at least, was intended for him. Upon his arrival, he flew to M. de Lessart. The minister told him, that nothing was yet decided ; but that a change would soon take place in the diplomatic body ; and, as he intended to propose him to the king, for one of the places which was to be vacated, he wished to have some conversation with him first, that he might be able to judge in what situation his services would be most useful. M. de Lessart then spoke to him of the opposition he experienced in the assembly from some of the principal deputies. At the name of Genfonné, Dumourier interrupted the minister.

“As for him,” said he, “he is my intimate friend, and entirely at my disposal ; I not only take in hand to put an end to his attacks against you, but even to bring him

him to receive your commands to-morrow morning, if you please."

M. de Lessart readily agreed to this proposal. Accordingly Genfonné accompanied Dumourier next day; expressed much regret at having misunderstood the minister's intentions, which had led him to oppose his measures; and, at length, promised entirely to change his conduct.

M. de Lessart was very well satisfied with this interview; conceived great hopes of benefit from it, and exulted in the lucky idea which had struck him of calling Dumourier to Paris. The general was not long of perceiving this, and did not fail to avail himself of it, with his usual address. On his third visit to the minister, he expressed a fear of being arrested by his creditors if he remained longer in Paris. There was no means of retaining him, but by paying his debts, which were pretty considerable; and the necessary sum was taken from the fund of secret expences, which was at the minister's disposal.

Some days after, Genfonné and the other friends which Dumourier had in the assembly, gave him to understand that it would be an easier matter for him to succeed M. de Lessart than to support him; and, in this instance, as in many others, ambition triumphed over gratitude.

M. de Lessart's talents, without being striking, were greatly above mediocrity; he had a penetrating and just understanding, and an upright mind, notwithstanding his ambition, which sometimes misled him. Perhaps he would have had energy of character, had he enjoyed a better state of health; for he was capable of adopting vigorous measures; but, unless they were put in execution immediately, a nervous attack, to which he was extremely subject, was sufficient to get the better of them.

He had long been the friend, the favourite, and admirer of M. Necker: he acknowledged, however, and bitterly lamented the faults of that minister's last administration; but those very faults appeared in the eyes of friendship the errors of virtue.

“ M. Necker,”

"M. Necker," said he, "does not know mankind ; and his great mistake is in judging of the hearts of others by his own."

M. de Lessart was neither a republican, nor a constitutionalist, but sincerely attached to the king, whose virtues he revered ; and, to the last moment, he gave his majesty every mark of zeal and fidelity that was in his power. He may be reproached, like all who composed the ministry at that time, with having continued to discharge the functions of his department after the king's departure for Varennes, and during his captivity. But it is presumable, that his majesty was satisfied with the motives which had induced the ministers to that conduct, though contrary to the orders he had left at his departure ; because he restored them all to his confidence afterwards, and was very much affected on account of the decree of accusation issued against M. de Lessart.

CHAP. XXI.

The account of my administration given in to the assembly.—It is printed, and distributed over the kingdom.—Discontent of the Jacobins.

My first care, on retiring from the ministry, was to get ready the account of my administration, which the assembly had a right to exact, and which the constitution allowed a month to prepare.

I was earnestly solicitous to shew, by an authentic act, and in a manner which would no way commit the king, all the errors of the new constitution, and the evils which arose from them in the department entrusted to me ; therefore, far from taking advantage of the delay which the constitution granted, I laid my account before the assembly on the 28th of March, thirteen days after my resignation. I added to this account an extract of the verbal processes of

the principal insurrections and mutinies which had taken place in the sea-ports, and on board the vessels, none of which had been punished. I subjoined copies of the letters which I received from navy officers, containing their motives of resignation. I regarded this supplement as a necessary and proper refutation of the calumnies which were spread against the marine body, accused of aristocracy, and of favouring despotism. I suppressed the signatures, that no individual might be brought into danger. Six thousand copies were immediately printed, and one sent to every member of the assembly ; a certain number to all the different departments, and to the principal municipalities of the kingdom. The remainder was distributed in Paris.

• In this publication, I laid open, without reserve, the fatal consequences of the unrestrained power arrogated by the clubs. The Jacobins were the more violently irritated as I brought such incontestible proofs of every circumstance, that the truth could not be doubted. This publication was not necessary

cessary to draw upon me the animadversion of the Jacobins, whose anger I had long before incurred ; and I should certainly have felt the effects of their rage, if the marine committee had been able to discover the least error in my calculations : but luckily they were equally exact with my narrative. I shall here give this memorial, not only as being the most important act of my ministry, but as it is also the only piece of the kind which has been published.

A statement, addressed to the national assembly by M. de Bertrand de Moleville, late minister of the marine, on the 27th of March, 1792.

“ I might limit myself, by presenting to the national assembly an account of those particulars only which they have the right of exacting from me ; but I have resolved to lay before them all the particulars of my conduct, and the motives of my actions, during the whole time that I was entrusted with the marine department.

“ The

“ The expenditure of money, which is generally the principal object of responsibility, was, I must say, during my administration, the circumstance of smallest importance ; I shall therefore, in this memorial, give what regards accounts separately. Those of a minister of marine are extremely simple, because he does not direct the expenditure at the ports ; he is only responsible for the contracts which he makes personally, or for those which he agrees to. He must likewise account for all expences which he authorizes to be made, and for the quarterly distribution of the funds. The administrators who reside in the ports, in the fleet, and in the colonies, are responsible that the funds which they are entrusted with shall be exactly distributed. I here lay before you the accounts which I have settled, and those of the contracts which I have concluded. All are conformable to the estimate which was fixed, according to the ordinary and extraordinary valuations of the different articles, and of the funds which were assigned. I have not only
never

never exceeded the estimate, but, on the contrary, have expended less than I was authorized to do, upon all those articles on which a saving could be made. At a time when the disposition of the maritime powers could give us no uneasiness, and when the demands of the war department were immense, this measure, which was prompted by the purest patriotism, and approved of by the king, produced, during the five months I was in office, an important saving.

“ I shall say no more upon a subject which can so easily be verified by an examination of the facts. I come now to the most essential parts of my administration; and this shall form the last answer I shall make to the reproaches which have been thrown out against me; for having now acquired the right to speak the whole truth, I shall conceal nothing.

“ From the moment I entered into administration, and during the short time which I continued in it, I have seen the sources of the wealth of the nation drained, our principal colony laid waste, the others
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in a state of discontent or insurrection, our trade decreasing, our navy disorganized, our docks, arsenals, and shipping presenting the frightful appearance of want of discipline, of anarchy, and contempt of the laws.

“ The cause of these evils was known to all. Those who ought to obey, had dared to threaten; and those who ought to command, were deprived of all authority, and were loaded with insults with impunity. I say with impunity, because there is no example of any one having been punished on account of the insurrections in the fleet or in the harbours, or for the mutinies excited against the naval officers. This will be proved, to your conviction, by the papers which are annexed to my account; and you will find that the most lawful acts of authority were considered as insults by those who had suddenly passed from a state of necessary subjection to one of entire independence. The clubs, which are corporations of a kind much more powerful than those which the constitution abolished, have

have exercised, in all our harbours, a fatal influence which none of the constituted authorities can resist ; for the workmen who receive daily pay, the clerks, the superintendents, and the subordinate officers, instead of being entirely occupied by their business, have ceased to obey the government which employed them, and have become dangerous instruments of sedition. What must be the consequence, when such persons are at once converted into reformers, political orators, and censurers of the administration ? What must become of public authority, when each individual exercises it ? How are orders to be issued, when the inferiors proscribe, insult, and put to flight their superiors ?

“ All these facts are of such public notoriety, that I have no fear of being accused of exaggerating them. I shall add to the papers which prove the truth of this memorial, some of lesser note, because it is my duty to conceal nothing.

“ It will not be forgotten, that between the two remarkable revolts against the principal

cipal officers, between the period at which M. d'Albott was insulted, and when M. de la Jaille was imprisoned, at the arrival of the Leopard at Brest, a navy clerk, who was then procureur of the municipality, pronounced a public discourse, in which he basely calumniated and menaced the whole navy, which was then entire, none of the officers having at that time abandoned the service. This scandalous speech was denounced in the constituent assembly, but the man who pronounced it became afterwards a member of the legislative body; and in the beginning of last December he wrote to the municipality of Brest in these terms, on mentioning me:

“ ‘ We wait for the impostor without fear. You did well to accuse and denounce him. . . . You will soon see how we shall treat him. . . . We despise the Marignys and Bertrands,’ &c. &c. * ”

* This letter was communicated by the municipality of Brest to M. de Marigny, who informed me of it; and I received likewise, at the same time, two copies of it. I have

"It is this man * who, after such a letter, has not hesitated to become the reporter of these denunciations, which he himself encouraged and procured.

"In entering into the ministry, I found the navy in this wretched condition. The patience of the officers was exhausted, but they continued brave, zealous, and patriotic. What ought I to do? Was it proper for the king's minister to increase the dif-

been reproached for not mentioning this (1); but how is it possible to mistake the motive of my silence? Being completely convinced that the accusations against me were unfounded, I naturally wished that the reporter should be a person whom no one could suspect of being too favourable to me. Such was my wish. Was it not accomplished even beyond my hopes?

* This violent patriot, whose name was Cavelier, came secretly to London in the year 1794, with the design of obtaining money from the English government, offering to have the port of Brest burnt, or delivered up to the English. I was informed of his arrival and of his intention, and gave immediate notice of it to Mr. Windham, who expressed the same horror which I had felt at this intimation. I assured him of the infamous character of this fellow, upon whom no dependence could be put; the consequence of which was, that Cavelier was ordered to quit the kingdom.

(1) *Vide Appendix, No. VII.*

fatisfaction, by encouraging informations, calumnies, and insurrections? Was it his duty to obey the insurgents in the sea-ports, or to conform himself to the spirit and letter of the constitution, and to endeavour to re-establish order and discipline, by putting the laws in execution against all who infringed them? This is what I have done; and those who reproached me with breaking the laws, by granting furloughs, have forgotten that I have justified each by the very words of those laws; and the three which were thought most reprehensible, were found, on examination, to be as conformable to the laws as the rest. In fact, there is no example of a knight of Malta being refused, in time of peace, leave of absence to execute the service of his order, because the cruising of Maltese vessels in the Mediterranean was found of use to our trade in that sea; and M. de Nieul, inspector of the marines, never having been employed since the year 1789, and it not being possible to employ him till the new organization of the army had taken place, he had no occasion for

a written permission to absent himself ; for he was in the situation of an unemployed general officer, therefore the leave of absence which I gave him was neither requisite nor written with all the forms, and was only requested by him that I might know where he was, in case of my having occasion to transmit the king's orders to him.

“ I have likewise been reproached for not having informed the legislative body of the disordered and abandoned state in which the harbour of Brest was ; and with having written to the editor of the *Moniteur*, on the 14th of November, that no naval officer had quitted his post. It was, without doubt, forgotten that my letter was an answer to the editor, who had made a false allegation in his paper. He had stated, in the preceding number, that I had requested to be heard in the assembly, to mention the new measures which the king had adopted, relative to the desertion of the officers in my department. I answered, as I ought, that I had not accused the naval officers of any new emigration, because the fact was, that

that since my being in administration, not one of them had quitted his post. And if the author of the observations addressed to the king, upon my conduct, had taken the trouble to look over the papers which were annexed to the report of the naval committee, he would have found, in page 26, an extract of the review of the 1st of October, and in the last page, an extract of that of the 20th of November, in both of which the number of officers absent without leave was stated to be two hundred and seventy-one. He must then have been convinced that I was fully authorised to assert, upon the 14th of November, that since my entrance into administration, no naval officer had quitted his post. He might have remembered, that one of the first acts of my administration was to propose to the king to recall all absent officers, by a letter addressed to the commandants of the sea-ports, beginning with these words :

" I am informed, sir, that the emigrations among the naval officers increase daily.

“ If he had recollected this letter, of which the national assembly were informed, and which was printed in the public newspapers, he must, without doubt, have perceived, that the reproach of having concealed the emigration of the naval officers was too palpably unjust, even to have been pronounced against me by the legislative body *.

“ I flattered myself, that by checking all disturbances, by punishing all disobedience of orders, and by preventing those acts of violence, which made the presence of the naval officers in the sea-ports dangerous to themselves, and useless for the service, that I should at length enable them to do their duty with the same firmness, with which, for two years, they had endured the reproaches, the suspicions, and threats with

* These are not the only mistakes which the author of the observations addressed to the king has fallen into. He accuses me of *having granted permissions of absence, although my predecessor had positively suspended them on the 15th of August.* But the fact is exactly the reverse; for in one month from the 15th of August, my predecessor granted leave of absence, or a prolongation of absence, to twenty-two officers:

which

which they were loaded. I was thoroughly sensible of the difficulties of such an undertaking, but I was not to be disconcerted by personal abuse or by secret plots. These attacks I considered as honourable proofs of my zeal for the public service: but my courage and my exertions were ineffectual; for I could only act by the power of government, and according to the law. But government was no longer respected, and the laws were violated with impunity; it was therefore impossible for me to attack a single abuse, without exciting outcries and accusations which were always strongly supported. The first impression is ever against the accused, especially when he is a minister; and in these wretched times, no man can be a minister without being instantly suspected of error, of wilful wrong, and of want of patriotism.

“In vain I invoked the vengeance of the laws against those who attacked and wounded M. de la Jaille. All Brest knew those who committed this outrage, which was perpetrated at mid-day, in the presence of a thou-

sand witnesses. The proceedings against the criminals commenced, and decrees were passed; but the execution of those decrees was suspended. The villains were protected by powerful demagogues, who terrified and controuled the ministers.

“ I attempted to suppress the insolence, disorder, and want of subordination, which reigned in our arsenals; but every effort was ineffectual; for the factious spirit of party and licentiousness annihilates all authority. All oeconomy and regularity is at an end; and the loss of time, and the waste of materials, may be computed at several millions, from the impossibility of punishing or dismissing those workmen, overseers, subordinate officers, and clerks, who were turbulent orators, and who were protected by the clubs.

“ In the shipping, the confusion was of a different kind, but equally impossible to be remedied.

“ A new form of trial has been established for those who commit offences on board a ship. This form will, perhaps, an-

swer very well in other times, when light is more generally diffused, and when the true principles of a free constitution are familiarly known by all. But experience has demonstrated, that, where the minds of men are new to liberty, and consequently unable to distinguish it from licentiousness, a maritime jury will not succeed in the manner expected by the constituent assembly. The appendix, which is added to this memorial, containing many decisions of juries, will leave no doubt upon this fact.

“ We need seek no other cause for the naval officers abandoning the service. Those who have sent in their resignations, and yet remain in France, have alleged no other motives in their letters to me; copies of which I think it my duty to lay before the national assembly. It appears by the sentiments expressed in these letters, that there is not one officer who is not ready to shed the last drop of his blood for his country, if he did not dread the loss of his honour, ever connected with the honour of the French flag.

“ The

“The legislative body will dissipate this well grounded apprehension, by taking immediate and effectual measures to establish order, discipline, and submission to the laws: this is the only means of saving the French navy from the destruction with which it is threatened, and of preventing the epoch of its new formation being that of its total dissolution.

“In the merchant service, there will be found all that can be effected by zeal and patriotism; but, unfortunately, it is only by great labour and long experience, that the talents requisite in the different ranks can be acquired. Tourville and Duguay-trouin were not the work of a day; they were formed by dangers and battles.

“But let us suppose, that the merchant service was able to furnish the state with a sufficient number of able officers, without obstructing commerce and endangering the safety of the merchant ships. How are these new officers to be obeyed, if the assembly does not adopt the necessary means to repress mutiny? How can the commanders,

manders, whoever they are, be responsible, in this profession, if there is not the most immediate implicit obedience? The slightest hesitation in executing an order, or in obeying a signal, may be sufficient to endanger the safety of the state! It is unnecessary for me to observe, that the first measure to be taken is, to suppress, in all the sea-port towns, those deliberating corporations, which were proscribed by the constituent assembly, which have had the power of annihilating all that confidence, respect, and submission, which are due from the inferior towards the superior officers.

“ I shall not enlarge upon the share I have had in the government of the colonies. The assembly already know the disasters which have taken place there, and the melancholy consequences which have followed. Both at St. Domingo, and at Martinico, as in France, all the evils have arisen from the disorganisation of the government, from the audacity of factious men, and from insurrections being unpunished.

punished. I have exerted myself, by making repeated demands and complaints to this assembly, even to importunity, to have the misfortunes of the colonies remedied ; and I have at least the consolation of knowing, that they were not owing to me.

“ Lastly, there is another truth, which is important, though little known, that I ought to attest and publish. During the five months and a half in which I have been in the ministry, I have never seen the king vary one moment from his fidelity to the principles of the constitution. I shall mention, in support of this assertion, a fact which recently occurred, and which made so great an impression upon my colleagues, that they cannot have forgotten it.

“ Towards the end of last month, a very delicate and important affair was brought before the council. There were two ways of acting ; the one would occasion a very considerable increase of the power of the crown, without exciting any discontent, because

because it was agreeable to the general wish. The other was the way more exactly conformable to the letter and spirit of the constitution. The king, without waiting for the advice of his ministers, did not hesitate a moment in deciding for the latter; and he signified his opinion in these remarkable words: *The constitution is to be faithfully executed, and we are never to attempt to increase the powers of the crown.* What an example to the constituted authorities! And how much is it to be wished for the good of the public, that all of them should confine their powers as scrupulously within the bounds that are prescribed!

“I submit these reflections to the wisdom of the national assembly. They are suggested to me by the purest love of my country. May my successor, happier than me, see true patriotism triumph over the passions and false opinions which I had to combat *!

(Signed) DE BERTRAND.”

* *Vide Appendix, No. VIII.*

This

This declaration, which was printed and directed to each member of the assembly, contains the most positive contradiction of all the accusations thrown out against me in the memorial addressed to the king. It was industriously spread through the whole kingdom as a challenge to any of my enemies to answer it: but as no one attempted its refutation, the absurd calumny of my having favoured the emigration of the naval officers, by paying them their appointments at Coblenz, and by granting to many the liberty of absenting themselves, was forgotten for a time.

The Jacobins, however, still honoured me by their animadversions. My name was never pronounced in the club without being accompanied with the epithets of infamous or villainous. The sole crime which they accused me of was being a member of the chimerical Austrian committee; and to make the existence of this committee credited, factious men published daily pretended discoveries of treasonable
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designs

designs and imaginary plots, in order to enrage and mislead the people.

It was not till the September following that the infamous Hebert, in the account which he published of the massacres of the prisoners at Orleans and Versailles, renewed the charges against me which had been begun by Cavelier, Rouhier, &c.; and he had the effrontery to support them by a public confession, which he asserted I made at the moment of my death; for I was included by him among the victims of this horrid massacre; and the relation of my punishment, accompanied with my last will, was not the least interesting part of his Journal.

It will appear, in the course of these Memoirs, that there was a strong reason for this falsehood*.

* An old French navy officer, who was cashiered by a court-martial, and declared unworthy and incapable of serving the king, was condemned to be imprisoned for twenty years, has just published a work, the object of which is, without doubt, to prove that he is worthy and capable of serving the republic, not only in the rank of *contre-amiral*, which he now holds, but in that of admiral in chief, of which he appears to be ambitious. This work is entitled *Precis des*

des Evénemens de la Guerre Maritime, des Causes de la Destruction de la Marine Française, et des Moyens de la rétablir.

The author's name is Y. J. Kerguelin. This admiral, worthy, by his impostures, of being the echo, and even the continuator of the journalist Hebert (1), repeats, from the relation of the massacres of Versailles, "that I facilitated the emigration of the general officers, and the other naval officers; and that I had presented a barren list of a corps, the individuals of which were at Coblenz, though they were paid as if at Toulon, Brest, Rochefort, or Paris." He adds, "that being the slave of a corrupt court, I was only fitted to promote its criminal views, in resisting the progress of the revolution, and in restraining the courageous efforts of the friends of liberty." Finally, he imputes to me "the rapid rise of General Truguet, an inexperienced youth, who was suddenly promoted to the rank of *contre-amiral*."

If I chose to make use of some notes which I had occasion to peruse, respecting Y. J. Kerguelin, amidst those which were kept in my office, concerning naval officers, who had been likewise cashiered, though for smaller offences, I could easily shew that it is prudent to distrust his assertions, even when official. I should only have to quote the report which he made of his first expedition to Terra Australis, of which he gave a most seducing description, although he never saw the country, except through a spying-glass. Every thing which he narrated, relative to the rich culture of the lands, the industry, intelligence, and mild manners of the inhabitants, is flatly contradicted by M. de Rosily the elder, who commanded the armed cutter with twenty men, which was sent there, and who asserts, that he had discovered, on this dry rocky country, no marks of cultivation, and no inhabitants; and that there were only found some sea-birds, which were so tame, that they allowed themselves to be taken by the hand, and the marks of one quadruped of the smallest

(1) Writer of a Journal known under the title of *Le Père Duchêne*.

species.

species. This description, which is precisely conformable to that of Captain Cook, will determine in what manner the reports and assertions of Y. J. Kerguelin are to be explained by those who wish to arrive at the truth. Thus, when he asserts, "that as the slave of a corrupt court, I was only fitted to promote its criminal views," that means, that at the time when I entered into administration, there was no court; and that the most virtuous and best-intentioned king was, in his own palace, as is known to all Europe, the only slave. When he advances, "that the emigrated officers were paid at Toulon, Brest," &c. &c. we must conclude that none were paid. Indeed it was impossible that any could be paid, without sending a certificate of their residence to the paymaster, who was personally responsible, and who never could receive any orders upon this subject from the minister. When he reproaches me "with having presented a barren list of naval officers, and of having promoted Truguet prematurely to the rank of *contre-amiral*," those assertions mean, that the list published during my administration had been drawn up and ordered by my predecessor, and that General Truguet was not named to the rank of *contre-amiral* till some months after my retreat. Finally, when he accuses me "of having destroyed the navy," it is then clear that I had no share in it; and that it ought to be imputed to the causes which I have explained in my statement, and to the negligence of the naval committee, in not framing such decrees as were necessary for re-establishing order and discipline in this department. This was affirmed by the minister himself, in his report upon the state of France, pronounced before the assembly July 10, 1792, that is to say, four months after my retreat. The minister of justice, speaking in the name of all his colleagues, announced, "that every thing was unsettled in the naval department, when M. La Coste entered into it; and that things were still in the same state, because, in spite of the efforts of the minister and of his predecessors,

cessors, to obtain from the assembly supplementary laws, to regulate the organization of this department, none had yet been decreed."

After having demonstrated, that in believing the *contre-amiral* Kerguelin, you are farther from the truth than in believing the very reverse of what he affirms, I cannot help congratulating myself upon his having abused my administration. With regard to his merit and military talents, although, before the sentence of the court-martial, which declared him unworthy and incapable of serving, he was considered by his commanders and his equals as an unskilful officer, and ignorant in his profession, yet his promotion to the rank of *contre-amiral* makes it impossible to doubt his having become suddenly as able as he thinks himself.

CHAP. XXII.

M. de Fleurieu named governor to the Prince Royal, but not invested in the office.—After my resignation, the king desires me to keep up a correspondence by letters with him.—The object of this.—His majesty consigns to me the direction of certain affairs, which had been formerly under the superintendence of M. de Lessart.—Spies employed by the tribunal of police.—Arrangement made with one of the principal members of the tribunal.—Measures equally expensive and useless.—Danton paid by the court.—The new ministers oblige the king to declare war, much against his inclination.

THE appointment of the king's household was a measure which could be delayed without any inconveniency: but it was not so with regard to the appointment of a governor to the

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Dauphin,

Dauphin, or, to speak in the constitutional stile, the Prince Royal. The first, or constituent assembly, had shewed an inclination to arrogate this power to themselves, or to render it null in the hands of the king, by transmitting a list made up by them, out of which he was to choose one for that office; but the numerous and absurd list which they formed appeared so ridiculous in the eyes of the public, that they thought it best to adjourn the exercise of this pretended right; from which period, to that of their dissolution, the multiplicity and importance of the affairs brought before them, had prevented the assembly from renewing their pretensions on this head. But as they never had formally abandoned them, it was highly probable that the second assembly might have made this claim, if the king, by deferring the appointment of a governor to the Prince Royal beyond the period fixed, had given reason to suspect that he harboured doubts of his own right.

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A few days before my resignation, therefore, I gave it to the king as my opinion, that he ought to name the governor without farther delay. His majesty felt the force of this; but still he was embarrassed how to act.

“Who can I choose?” said he. “Do you know any person, proper for the situation, whom the Jacobins would not detest? And I would rather that my son remained without a governor, than expose the worthy man, whom I should appoint, to the insults of the people, and perhaps to assassination. On the other hand,” continued he, “I am sensible, that if I do not appoint a governor myself, the Jacobins may probably propose Condorcet, the Abbé Sieyès, or some other such unprincipled person. Have you any one in view?”

“No, sire,” answered I; “I thought that you had already considered the matter, and that your choice was fixed. I ought, however, to inform your majesty, that at the time the ministers were occupied

in forming your household establishment, M. de Fleurieu appeared to them the most eligible person, as he was favourably looked upon by the Jacobins, upon account of the moderation of his conduct to the clerk Bonjour."

"M. de Fleurieu, I think, would suit us," said the king. "He is very well informed, and he is a man of probity, on whom I could rely. There is nothing against him but his timidity and excessive gentleness. But is it certain that he would accept of the situation?"

"I do not imagine," replied I, "that the ministers informed themselves of that: but if you desire it, I will see M. de Fleurieu, and find out his own inclinations, without letting him know that I am commissioned by your majesty."

"Do so," said the king; "and do not delay to inform me."

I went directly from the palace to M. de Fleurieu. I gave, as a pretext for my visit, the desire I had to talk to him concerning his pension, which I told him I hoped to have

have fixed before I quitted administration. I then insensibly led the conversation to the subject of the Prince Royal's governor. I said that he ought to have a view to that situation, for which he was very well qualified. He answered, with modesty, that it was the place in the kingdom which would most flatter his ambition; but that he was so far from thinking himself qualified, that he would not presume to place himself in the list of candidates. By all he said, it was easy to perceive that he would accept of the offer with great pleasure; and I returned immediately to the king, who was very well pleased with this intelligence.

The nomination of M. de Fleurieu to the place of governor to the Prince Royal was deferred till the end of March; and the king informed the assembly of it by a letter, which they immediately referred to a committee. The opinion which I transmitted to his majesty was, that without waiting for the report of the committee, M. de Fleurieu should be

installed in his new situation, and begin to discharge the duties belonging to it, that the assembly might not imagine its right in this nomination was different from what the constitution allotted them, respecting the king's nomination of ministers, in which they had no negative. I represented also to M. de Fleurieu, that if he did not take possession immediately, the king's prerogative would be attacked; for any hesitation on such a point would encourage the pretensions of the assembly. My advice, however, was not followed.

M. de Fleurieu had no uneasiness on this subject. He had caused some of the members of the committee to be spoken to, who, as he heard, were favourably disposed to him; he was convinced, on the whole, that the report would be made in the course of the week, and that he had no obstacles to apprehend. However, the report, as I had foreseen, was put off from week to week, upon various pretences, and was never made; so that no other advantage was derived from

the nomination of M. de Fleurieu but that of preventing the assembly from appointing a governor to the Prince Royal. It is fortunate that M. de Fleurieu was not invested in that office before the 10th of August, as in that case he would probably have augmented the number of illustrious victims sacrificed on that fatal day ; and France would have lost in him a man, estimable for his learning and talents, and for the purity of his principles.

On quitting the ministry, I expressed my regret that I could not pay my duty to his majesty with the same assiduity I wished, without creating suspicions that might be dangerous to him ; I therefore proposed only to attend his levee every Sunday ; and this I thought would be expedient, because, if I never appeared there at all, it would be immediately believed that he saw me in secret.

The king approved of this, and at the same time gave me the superintendance of an operation which was first contrived and set a-going by Alexander Lameth, afterwards directed by M. de Lessart, and in the present

present circumstances seemed more necessary than ever. The object of this was to obtain a minute knowledge of the public disposition, by the means of certain persons called observers, who were chosen and employed for that purpose.

At this time they were in number thirty-five. Some attended the tribunes of the assembly, others the Jacobin club and that of the Cordeliers, whilst others were ordered to mix in the various groups who attended in the Palais Royal, the Thuilleries, the principal coffee-houses, and the cabarets. Their business was to support, by their applause, all constitutional and royalist motions, and to hiss, and even insult, whoever proposed a measure contrary to the interest of the king and the constitution. Their custom was, to give in a daily report of whatever they saw or heard. It was the province of the most intelligent, who were highest paid, to combat every seditious motion in the various societies. Giles, a subaltern officer in the *gard nationale*, entirely devoted to the king,

took in the above reports, and delivered them to M. de Lessart, from whom he received directions respecting the operations of the following day. These men were also employed to stick up, during the night, placards of a constitutional or royalist nature, according to the circumstances.

The king, by this means, knew all that passed in Paris, and might have derived advantages from it at least equal to the expence of the whole operation, which amounted to 8000 livres a month, had it not been for his aversion to those vigorous measures which the present emergence required: but that aversion was so great, that the information he received only served to alarm and torment him.

At the time, however, that the king made this proposal to me, I was so fully convinced that his having timely notice of the dangers which threatened him might save the royal family, that I accepted it without hesitation, although I could not but be sensible of the perilous nature of such an employment; for had it been discovered, or
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even surmised, I should not merely have run the risk of being sent a prisoner to Orleans, like M. de Lessart, but of being torn in pieces by the populace.

But that the danger I was willing to incur might prove as useful as possible, I proposed to the king that the observers above mentioned should be commissioned to investigate and point out to the tribunals of police the names and abodes of the most seditious and dangerous vagabonds, from all countries, who at that time infested the capital. His majesty having approved of this, I immediately made it my business to search for a sensible and well-intentioned justice of peace of the police department, and I found one of this description in M. Buob, an Alfacian by birth, who, before the revolution, had been in partnership with Duvernois the banker, and had since been appointed justice of peace and one of the six who composed the tribunal *de la police correctionnelle*, in which his indefatigable activity gave him great influence. I commissioned a person, in whom I could confide,

fide,

side, to endeavour to find out how Buob stood inclined. He was found to be as favourably disposed as we could wish, and he came to me next night about nine o'clock. I told him that the king, being informed of the zeal and activity with which he attended to the police of Paris, had desired me to express his approbation to him. This greatly flattered him. He boasted much of the services which had been rendered by the tribunal of police, and likewise assured me that it was in his power to render much greater, provided he was assisted.

"But unluckily," said he, "we have no other fund from which we can pay our agents, except the produce of the confiscations and fines."

Unwilling to let him suspect that the king had any knowledge of the plan respecting the observers,

"You shall not want money," said I, "if I succeed in gaining you the confidence of a society of rich citizens, who, for their personal security, have raised a pretty considerable fund, for the purpose of keeping in
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pay a certain number of persons, who inform them of all that passes in the capital ; and I have no doubt of their agreeing, at my request, to put those persons under your command."

" Oh !" said he; " but these people cannot be depended upon so much as those which the police have already engaged, but whom we have no sufficient fund to pay them from."

" Well," answered I, " I shall propose to the society to grant a reward of one hundred livres for the discovery of each seditious person ; which money shall be immediately paid, on the legal conviction of the criminal."

" Cannot the king," said he, " throw that expence upon the civil list ?"

" I certainly shall not propose such a thing to him," answered I. " M. de la Porte, who is scrupulously exact, would not fail to insert the article in his register, and the consequence might prove as disagreeable to you as prejudicial to the king."

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This answer seemed to satisfy Buob, whom I did not think proper fully to trust, until I knew more about him.

The denunciations began the following week; and betwixt that period, to the end of July, fifty-eight of the most seditious were taken up and tried. Part of them were condemned to three years' imprisonment, and others to two years, in the castle of Bicêtre, where they remained in confinement till after the 10th of August, when the mob forced the doors of that prison, and set them at liberty.

One of these rascals, named Fournier, afterwards commanded the detachment which was sent from Paris, forced the prison at Orleans, and conducted the prisoners from thence to Versailles, and there gave them up to the assassins who waited for them.

His majesty likewise entrusted me with the direction of another establishment of the same kind, much more expensive, at the head of which was a man of an intriguing spirit, whom particular reasons
prevent

prevent me from naming. M. de Montmorin had begun to employ him, during the first assembly, as a secret agent of all the private negotiations of the ministry, in order to make particular motions be supported or rejected in the assembly or in the Jacobin club. He had pretty well fulfilled this employment, and his services had not passed unrewarded ; for besides the avowed recompence he received from the minister, he probably retained a small gratification out of the money which he was commissioned to distribute. This subtle man, dextrous and insinuating, always of the opinion of the person he conversed with, was, in reality, attached to no party. He persuaded M. de Montmorin, that from his intimacy with the popular characters of the revolution, it was in his power to be of essential service to the king, especially by inspiring and keeping up a spirit of loyalty in the *garde nationale* of Paris, by associating himself with the officers and soldiers who had the greatest influence in their particular battalions : but he observed, that for
this

this purpose he must have it in his power to invite about twenty of them every day to dinner, and also to distribute little presents, from time to time, amongst them, according as circumstances seemed to require ; that upon an exact calculation he found that 34,000 livres a month would be sufficient for these purposes ; and by this means he hoped in a short time to secure a majority in all the sections.

The ministers, so far from hesitating to grant him the sum he demanded, were convinced that they had made a most advantageous bargain ; and, in order to remove the suspicion which his expensive manner of living might give rise to, M. de Lessart, then minister of the home department, at the desire of M. de Montmorin, named him to a place of 10,000 livres a year, which, together with his own personal property, might be supposed to enable him to support the expence which his plan required him to keep up. On due investigation, I found that no advantage had resulted from this measure, either by conciliating the national

guards or the sections, who continued as ill disposed as ever. And besides, as the expence, which amounted to 400,000 livres a year, could now only be defrayed from the funds of the civil list, I persuaded the king to reserve this sum for a more useful purpose; and it may occasion surprise to many, when they are informed, that it was through the means of this very agent, that the noisy patriot Danton received more than a hundred thousand crowns under the ministry of M. de Montmorin, for proposing or supporting the various motions in the Jacobin club. He faithfully fulfilled his engagement, always reserving to himself the liberty of employing the means he thought would best succeed in making his motions pass. His usual method was to season them with violent declamations against the court and ministers, that he might not be suspected of being sold to them.

After the retreat of M. de Montmorin, M. de Lessart, who continued to employ the same agent, being in a committee at the
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house of the *Garde des Sceaux*, suddenly broke it up, saying he had appointed a person to meet him upon an affair of consequence. I myself set him down at his own house; and, in our way, he told me, that the business for which he had been called out was to advance twenty-four thousand livres to a person who was to remit this sum to Danton, in order to engage him to carry a particular motion in the Jacobin club. The sum appeared to me exorbitant; and, as I had a person of confidence in the Jacobin club, I told M. de Lessart, that unless it was a matter of great importance, and of a very delicate nature, I probably could get it brought on and passed, without costing him a farthing. Upon his telling me the object of the motion, I thought it might be of some utility; and, by having it presented in the popular style of the times, might very probably be carried. Accordingly, by the address of the person I usually employed in the club, the motion was next day made by Dubois de Crancé, and passed without opposition.

The agent, whom I have avoided to name, when he understood from M. de la Porte, that the king had entrusted me with the superintendency of the secret business in which he was employed, called on me about this time; and, vaunting his own services, he assured me, that he had been commissioned by M. de Lessart, towards the end of December 1791, to make proposals to the deputies Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadet, the Abbe Fauchet, and another still alive, and at present in the assembly, whose name I suppress on that account: in consequence of which, these deputies had agreed to give their voices and influence in the assembly, to the minister, for the sum of six thousand livres a month, to be paid to each; adding, that M. de Lessart thought they required too high a price; and, as they would not abate the least in their demand, the negotiation ended, and only produced the effect of irritating these five deputies against the minister.

If

If it should be thought surprising that these deputies should entrust a man of this kind with a secret of such importance, all that I can say from my own certain knowledge is, that the deputies in question shewed the greatest rancour against the minister; but, with regard to the other fact, I have only the man's authority.

At this time M. Servan having been appointed minister of war instead of M. de Grave, the whole cabinet was composed of Jacobins, who, being supported by the *Côté Gauche* of the Assembly, loudly called for a declaration of war against the emperor and the king of Prussia. The king was persuaded, that their chief motive was, that they might have more plausible pretexts of accusing him of having a secret intelligence with the courts of Vienna and Berlin; he therefore deferred the final determination of the council as long as possible, and only consented to propose the declaration of war to the assembly, after each of the ministers had separately given him

his opinion and motives in writing signed by them.

The assembly received this message with transport, and decreed with acclamations the declaration of war. The enemies of the king and queen were much less occupied in putting France in a situation to sustain it, than in endeavouring to take advantage of the critical situation in which this new order of things placed their majesties. The scrupulous exactness with which the king, faithful to his oath, adhered to the constitution, had hitherto disconcerted the projects of the Jacobins, and discredited the assertions they continually repeated, of the king's dislike to the constitution, and of his seeking to overthrow it. This vague accusation being given up, as having ceased to make any impression, the Jacobins now substituted in its stead, the accusation of betraying the nation; and his majesty was attacked for purposely neglecting, as was boldly asserted, to give necessary orders to the ministers for repairing the frontier towns,

towns, providing them in warlike stores, and completing the regiments: they also accused him of keeping up a secret correspondence with the emperor, and indicating to him those parts of the frontiers where he would meet with the least resistance, and even sending him money to defray the expence of his operations; and some of the populace declared to the municipality of Paris, that they had seen whole waggon-loads of gold on their way to Vienna. In short, the coffee-houses, public walks, and clubs resounded with plots and conspiracies of the pretended *Comitee Autrichien*.

These accusations, however absurd, became dangerous, because the king would not condescend to refute them. The avidity and credulity with which the vulgar are wont to receive reports of treasons, plots, and conspiracies, dispensed the journalists and club orators from the necessity of supporting them with the slightest proof.

CHAP. XXIII.

*The critical situation in which the king was.
 —Imposture of an Austrian committee
 renewed.—Carra denounces M. de Mont-
 morin and me in the Jacobin club as
 members of that pretended committee.—
 We give in a complaint against him, and
 against several Journalists.—Proposal sent
 to me by the Jacobins.—Imprudence of the
 Judge Larivière.—Decree of accusation
 against him.—Brissot and Gensonné under-
 take to prove the truth of the Austrian
 Committee.*

THE king had never before been placed in so dangerous a situation : his council was entirely composed of Jacobin ministers ; and, the consequence of this measure, which he had been made to think would render him popular, was to render every act of popularity fruitless for himself, while the whole merit devolved upon
 the

the ministers. For they were at pains to impress on the public, that every popular measure proceeded from them; and that those acts of government which, though absolutely necessary, were displeasing to the multitude, proceeded from the king. So that this unfortunate prince, destitute of all support, of every resource, had nothing to oppose to the ferocity of his enemies, their plots and their calumnies, but the mildness of his character, and his inexhaustible patience; unfortunately, the king's enemies were too well acquainted with his being possessed of those qualities, which are always hurtful to a tottering throne, and often weaken the foundation of the best established.

The ridiculous story of the Austrian committee was again revived, and most successfully employed in irritating the people against the court. The most subtle and criminal methods were made use of in order to convince the public of the existence of this committee.

One Sieur Richer de Serify went to the house of Renaut St. Jean d'Angely, and invited him, in the name of the princess de Lamballe, to a committee which was to be held at her house on Friday evening at six o'clock ; and told him, that he would find there, amongst others, Messrs. de Montmorin, Bertrand, and Malouet. Renaut fell into the snare. All his doubts respecting the Austrian committee vanished ; and he was endowed with vanity sufficient to think it the most natural thing on earth that he should be summoned to a society where subjects of the highest importance were discussed, and in which wisdom was so requisite : he enjoyed the importance he derived from an invitation from the princess, who, he supposed, acted in consequence of orders from the king and queen. He could not help being a little surprised, however, how their majesties had divined that he was so much better a royalist than he had hitherto appeared, or indeed than he had till now conceived himself to be. Full of these ideas, he waited upon M. Malouet,

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with

with whom he had never been in any habits of intimacy, although they had been both members of the first assembly. M. Malouet was rather surpris'd at his visit; but still more so, on his expressing great satisfaction at the frequent opportunities he should now have of meeting with him.

"Where are we to meet so often?" said M. Malouet.

"In the committee at Madame de Lamballe's," answered Renaut.

"Upon my honour, sir, I don't know what you are speaking of," said M. Malouet; "I am not acquainted with Madame de Lamballe, neither am I of any committee,"

"I do not mean a public committee," replied Renaut, "but the secret one which is held at the princess de Lamballe's, who has done me the honour to send Richer de Serisy to invite me to attend on Friday evening; and I was informed by him, that I should meet you and Messieurs Montmorin and Bertrand. So you need not keep any longer upon the reserve."

"I can

“ I can only repeat, sir,” said M. Malouet, “ that I am entirely ignorant of what you mean : I never set my foot within the princess de Lamballe’s door ; I hardly know her by sight, and I am not of any committee, public or secret.”

“ What then am I to think,” said Renaut, astonished, “ at the message I received by Richer de Serify ?”

“ I suspect,” replied M. Malouet, “ that it is either done by way of a joke, or that it is a snare laid for you ; therefore, I advise you to be upon your guard.”

Upon this they separated. M. Malouet came directly to my house, and gave me an account of what had just passed.

This appeared to require the more attention, as for several days past, the Journalists, and those who made motions in the Palais Royal and public places, had been endeavouring to raise the people by the most violent declamations on the subject of plots, asserted to be carried on by the supposed Austrian committee. A list of the

names of all the members composing this committee was announced to be published soon : in the mean time, all true patriots were pathetically called upon to revenge the atrocious conspiracies formed against their liberty.

On the Sunday before, two orators had been taken up in the Palais Royal, who were haranguing to a crowd of people against the court and the Austrian committee. Their vehement declamations, and patriotic sentiments, excited such admiration, that the agents of police durst not have seized upon them, if they had not been, at the same time, detected picking the pockets of their admiring auditors. Upon examination, those two patriots were found to carry the marks of the whip and burnt iron on their shoulders : patents of their association with the Jacobin club were found at the same time in their pockets.

Possessed of the above facts, I went to confer with M. de Montmorin, who was equally interested with myself ; and I was
then

then informed, that Carra had, the day before, denounced the Austrian committee in the Jacobin club; and that both M. de Montmorin and myself were pointed out in the denunciation as the principal members of that committee.

I thought I could not find a more favourable opportunity of unmasking the malice of those unprincipled men, and of exposing their atrocious motives for inventing this calumny. M. de Montmorin thought, on the contrary, that the wisest plan was to despise this clamour, and let it fall to the ground of itself; but, as he saw that I was not disposed to adopt that opinion, he earnestly besought me not to venture to act in a matter so extremely hazardous, without having calmly reflected upon it. My reflections were not long; and the result of them was, to give in a complaint to the criminal tribunal against Carra and his accomplices; particularly the Journalists, who contributed to spread the belief of the fable of the Austrian committee; namely, Brissot and Condorcet, the writers of the

Chro-

Chronique de Paris and the Patriote François ; but, before I actually presented this accusation, I thought proper to submit it to the king and queen ; and accordingly sent a copy for their consideration : I then dispatched a courier to Anet, where the princess of Lamballe was, to inform her of what had happened ; and to enquire if she was acquainted with Richer de Serisy, and had sent him to invite Renaut St. Jean d'Angely to attend a committee at her house ; or if she knew of any committee either held at her own house or in her apartment in the palace.

The next day the king returned the copy of my complaint, with the following words written on the margin with his own hand :

“ I read to the queen the complaint you propose giving in. We cannot mistake the motive which impels you ; and we are sensibly touched with this proof of your attachment ; but we fear that it will expose you to danger ; have a care.*”

That

* “ J'ai lu a la reine le projet de plainte. Nous ne pouvons pas nous mé prendre sur le motif qui suggere cette démarche ;

That same day, I received exactly such an answer as I expected from the princess de Lamballe: she knew neither Richer de Serisy, nor Renaut St. Jean Angely; and had never in her life been of any committee.

I wrote to the king,

“That no apprehension of personal danger would ever influence me to defer one moment any measure which I thought would be advantageous for his majesty.”

In consequence of my determination, I went to Buob, *Juge de Paix*, who advised me to carry this affair before the tribunal *de Police Correctionnelle*, which was then in force; and to make my complaint be heard by the *Juge de Paix* Larivière, who was the most intelligent and best disposed member of that tribunal.

I took his advice; and, on my application, Larivière ordered the case to be brought before him, and witnesses to be heard.

et nous en sommes bien vivement touchés; mais nous craignons l'un et l'autre qu'elle ne vous compromette; prenez y bien garde.”

The

The next day my complaint was published in the journals, and six thousand copies were sold in the capital. This step made a very great impression; and excepting the Jacobins, who were enraged at being thus publicly exposed, ridiculed, and debased, all parties were pleased; but those royalists, above all, who had continued to attend at the palace, and assiduously to pay court to their majesties, and who, upon that account, had reason to fear that their names would be inserted in the list of the Austrian committee, announced to be published. On the following Sunday, therefore, as soon as I appeared at the king's levee, I received the compliments and thanks of many for what I had done.

After having heard the deposition of the princess de Lamballe, M. de Malouet, and Renaut St. Jean d'Angely, and having in vain endeavoured to find out Richer de Serisy *, M. Larivière issued a decree that

Carra

* Richer de Serisy called on me about a month after this affair was entirely over, and assured me that the invitation he had given to Renaut was a mere pleasantry of his own, to

Garra should appear before him. He presented himself accordingly, and declared, in his own defence, that he had been authorised by Merlin, Bazire, and Chabot, members of the committee of public safety, to bring forward the accusation against M. de Montmorin and M. Bertrand, which had given occasion for this complaint.

Upon this occasion, a Jacobin, whom I had formerly been acquainted with, called on me, and endeavoured, in vain, to alarm me upon the consequences of this affair.

"Those who persuaded you to undertake it," said he, "have given you very bad advice. I dare not tell you the extent of the danger which threatens you."

"Then I will tell you," answered I. "I am threatened with assassination, am I not? It is what I expected," continued I, "and I am prepared accordingly. Here is an excellent blunderbuss, charged with twenty-

expose the credulous vanity of the man, in which the Jacobins had no part. This may be true; but the contrary might naturally enough be believed by those who were not in Serisy's confidence, or who had no great opinion of his veracity.

five balls ; and besides, here are four pair of pistols, not to mention my sword. My brother is as well prepared ; and I leave the rest to Providence : but whatever may be the consequences, I can blame nobody, for I had no counsellors."

" Well, it is altogether very unlucky business," said he : " but you might still turn it to advantage, and gain as many friends among the Jacobins as you have among the aristocrats."

" That would be curious indeed," answered I. " Do you seriously imagine it possible?"

" Not only possible," said he, " but very easy, I will answer for it."

" But how is it to be done ?" replied I ; " for I shall never be able to guess."

" You have only to withdraw your complaint, declaring that your attack was originally directed against a few individuals : but finding that it might involve many good patriots, whose intentions are honest and praise-worthy, you therefore desist from all further prosecution. By this

means your object will be effectually fulfilled, without danger to yourself; for you may be assured that the Austrian committee will never more be heard of."

"So this is your advice?" replied I. "To which I answer, that were it in my power to follow it, I would not; and were it *now* in my inclination, I could not, because the information is already given in to the court, and the judges have only to pass sentence."

"Oh! as for that," said he, "means might be fallen upon to stop the proceedings."

"No more, if you please, on this subject," said I, a little out of humour.

"I beg," replied he, "that you may take great care, sir, of what you are about. This is a very serious matter. It is only my attachment for you which leads me to give you this advice; for nobody desired me to speak to you upon the business. I once more beg you will reflect."

"Yes,

"Yes, yes," interrupted I, "I shall reflect. Give yourself no uneasiness. I wish you good morning."

And so ended our conversation.

M. de Montmorin, seeing the good effect my measure produced, added his complaint to mine; and a few days afterwards we jointly gave in an accusation against Merlin, Bazire, and Chabot, who, according to Carra's testimony, were the real instigators of our denunciation in the Jacobins. Upon this new complaint, Larivière issued an order to arrest Merlin, Bazire, and Chabot: but unluckily he was carried away by the desire of acting a great part, and of making himself remarkable; and in defiance of every consideration of prudence, he drew upon himself the indignation of the assembly, by executing the law in the most disrespectful manner against these popular members, whom he caused to be raised out of their beds, and brought before his tribunal at five o'clock in the morning. His pretence for this inconsiderate conduct was, that he wished to

avoid interfering with their attendance on the assembly, and summoned them at that early hour, that they might be at liberty when the assembly met.

This bold attack on the dignity of national representation might naturally be supposed to excite the animadversions of the assembly, and accordingly Larivière was summoned to the bar to answer for his conduct. He presented himself with steadiness, and justified his proceedings by an appeal to the constitution, which had not established any distinction in the manner of arresting persons in different situations, and therefore he could not presume to introduce any new form.

This tribute to the equality of rights conciliated the tribunes and part of the assembly: but unfortunately for him, he drew upon himself the hatred of the majority, by the contempt which his account of the depositions and examination raised against the fable of the Austrian committee. Brissot and Genfonné could not endure that an invention, which they had employed

ployed so successfully against the court, should be treated as a ridiculous chimera. They did not scruple to assert, that the circumstances stated in the process were false; and they engaged to bring before the assembly the most evident proofs of the reality of the Austrian committee, and of the plots which were there planned.

This report was adjourned for eight days. His majesty, in the mean time, affected with the danger which the ill-judged, though well-meant, zeal of M. Larivière had drawn upon him, was desirous to assist him by every means in his power; for which purpose, he commissioned the *Ministre de Justice* to send an order to the *Accusateur Public* for prosecuting the inventors and propagators of the calumny regarding the Austrian committee; and he sent a letter to inform the assembly of what he had done *. But this did not prevent the assembly from passing a decree against M. Larivière, who was accordingly sent to the

* *Vide* Appendix, No. IX.

prison at Orleans, for having failed in respect to the nation in the person of its representatives.

This truly honest man shared the fate of the prisoners who were sent to Orleans. All were massacred on the September following, excepting some domestics, and an officer of artillery named Loyauty, who was grievously, but not mortally wounded.

The report of Brissot and Gensonné drew an immense concourse to the assembly. Each of the reporters spoke a long while, and were listened to with attention: but instead of the evident proofs they had announced, their speeches consisted of declamation, and assertions unsupported by any proof at all.

"These are but words," was repeated from all sides. "To the proofs, to the proofs. Where, then, are your proofs?"

The silence of the deputies, upon this summons, raised a general hiss and burst of laughing; and here the assembly broke up.

A few days after, M. de Montmorin and I published separately our answers to these reports,

reports, which we set in such a ridiculous point of view, that from that time forward no journalist or motion-maker ventured to mention the Austrian committee; and if any persons afterwards, in private, attempted to speak of it seriously, they were laughed at.

CHAP. XXIV.

A secret message to foreign courts, with which M. Mallet-du-Pan is entrusted.—I advise the king to recommend him to the Baron de Breteuil.—His majesty's answer.—The effect which the unhappy issue of his journey to Varennes had produced on the king's mind, with respect to the Baron de Breteuil.—The powers with which his majesty had entrusted that minister.—The period and motives of their revocation.—Cause of the quarrel between Messrs. de Breteuil and Calonne.—The king orders me to recommend Mallet-du-Pan to the Marechal de Castries, and to correspond with the former.—Mallet-du-Pan being arrived in Germany, receives a credential under the king's hand.—Exhausted state of the civil list.—Secret loan.

THE campaign was going to open ; and although the king did not foresee all the ill consequences which would follow, yet

yet he looked forward to the war with very great inquietude. Above all, he apprehended that the victories, which he did not doubt would be gained by the Austrians and Prussians, would rekindle the fury of the Jacobins against the priests and nobles who remained still in France.

The fears which his majesty expressed in his letters to me, were the occasion of my proposing to him to send a person of confidence to the emperor and the king of Prussia, to endeavour to prevail on them not to allow their armies to act offensively against France, until they should be under the last necessity of so doing; and even in that case to make the entrance of their armies into France be preceded by a manifesto, in which they should declare, "that, forced to take arms by an unjust attack, they did not impute that aggression either to the king or to the French nation, but to a criminal faction which oppressed both; consequently, far from departing from the sentiments of amity which united them to France, that their intention, on the contrary,

trary, was to deliver that nation from tyranny, and restore it to legal order and tranquillity ; that they had no view of interfering with the form of government, but merely to secure to the nation the right of adopting that which suited it the best ; that all idea of conquest was foreign to their thoughts ; that private property should be by them equally respected as national property ; that their majesties took all peaceable and faithful subjects under their protection ; that they considered as their enemies those only who were the enemies of France, namely, the faction of Jacobins and all its adherents," &c.

In consequence of the manner in which I had often heard M. Malouet speak of Mallet-du-Pan, with whom I was not myself acquainted, I advised the king to employ him on this occasion, which could be done with the more safety, because he had never been at court, and was little known to those who frequented it ; and he might proceed to Germany by the way of Geneva, to which city he was in the use of making frequent

frequent journies, and of course his departure would create no suspicion.

The talents and probity of Mallet-du-Pan were not unknown to the king, who immediately agreed to my proposal. It would have been imprudent to have given him letters of credit, but at the same time it was absolutely necessary that he should have the means of convincing the emperor and the king of Prussia that he was really sent by Lewis XVI. In my letter to his majesty I therefore proposed to address Mallet-du-Pan to the baron de Breteuil; and I gave, as my reason for this proposal, *the powers which, as I had heard, that minister had received from the king.* In answer to this article of my letter, the king wrote in the margin,

“Not at all. He has no longer any powers from me: but you may address Mallet-du-Pan, in my name, to the Marechal de Castries, with the precautions you propose, which are very necessary *.”

* “Point du tout. Il n'en à plus, vous pouvez adresser Mallet-du-Pan, de ma part, au Marechal de Castries, avec les precautions que vous proposez; elles sont nécessaires.”

This

This answer recalled to my memory marks of displeasure which I had observed in the king's countenance, when the baron de Breteuil's name was mentioned in his presence. One day, in particular, before M. de Lessart and me, the following sentence, pronounced in an angry tone, escaped him :

“It was he that prompted us to take that cursed journey to Varennes.”

Having frequently since had the opportunity of conversing with the marquis de Bouillé, I once asked an explanation of this expression of the king, because it seemed to disagree entirely with the letter which the marquis wrote to the assembly, after the king's return, in which he took on himself the whole blame of that journey. M. de Bouillé told me that he had written that letter, to turn the fury of the assembly from the king and others, by arrogating the whole contrivance of the plan to himself. At the same time he positively assured me, that the project of Varennes had been

first proposed by the baron de Breteuil; that the bishop of Pamiers, being sent to him by that minister with a letter from the king, on the 22d of October 1790, had informed him of the plan for the escape of the royal family to Montmedi, assuring M. de Bouillé, that this was the only condition on which the emperor would take an active part in favour of the king; and that the baron was the chief manager of the project; that he (the marquis de Bouillé) had strongly objected to it, representing the dismal consequences that so very dangerous a step might have; that it would be more advisable to wait until the people in general, and the army in particular, were entirely disabused, and until the opinion of both should become more favourable for the king, which it was doing every hour; that by the influence which the famous affair at Nancy had given to him over the troops and inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine, he was convinced that he could have made them adopt the white cockade, had he not been prevented by express orders from his majesty; that the bishop of Pamiers had

answered

answered to all this, that the king was absolutely resolved to follow this plan, but that he would defer its execution until the spring, that M. de Bouillé might have time to prepare every thing necessary to insure success. After this, M. de Bouillé told me that he corresponded with the king and queen, by the means of the baron de Fersem and of the baroness de Korpff; that he had frequently renewed his remonstrances to their majesties and to M. de Breteuil himself, against this perilous enterprise.

M. de Bouillé attributed its failure, First, To the suspicions which arose from the troops detached to protect the king, remaining too long on the road. This was owing to his departure from Paris having been deferred twenty-four hours longer than had been intended, of which M. de Bouillé was not informed till after the departure of the different detachments.

Secondly, To the king's having forgotten to order a courier or two, as had been agreed on, to set out two hours before the carriage in which the royal family were,
on

on purpose to inform the commanding officers of the detachments and posts that were established on the rout.

Thirdly, To the stop occasioned by an accident that happened to one of the carriages between Paris and Chalons.

Fourthly, To the detachment at the first post after Chalons having been removed before the royal family arrived. The officer who commanded, having waited an hour beyond the time he had calculated for the king's arrival, imagined that the scheme had been abandoned, and therefore removed his troop*.

With respect to the powers given to the baron de Breteuil, I shall report, word for word, what I was assured of by two gentlemen, members of the council formed in Germany by the princes, the king's brothers, in the year 1792. Both of these

* M. de Bouillé's assertions respecting the failure of this plan for the king's escape are confirmed, or at least strongly supported, by a statement which that general made from the reports of all the officers employed in its execution; a piece equally curious and authentic, which I shall give at length at the end of this chapter.

gentlemen enjoyed the confidence of their royal highnesses.

When the baron de Breteuil left Versailles, at the period of M. Necker's recall, he was invested with the power of treating with foreign courts, and of proposing any measure in the king's name, which, in his opinion, tended to promote the re-establishment of the royal authority, or of good order in the kingdom. No advantage appears to have been derived from this power, while he had a right to make use of it: but it will appear, by what follows, that he continued to employ it when he was no longer authorised to do so, unless he received new powers from his majesty posterior to the period in question, namely, the month of May 1792, in which case he will be able to justify himself completely, when he shews the second, or renewed powers, as well as the first, which were recalled.

In July 1789, when the king was obliged to go to the *Hotel de Ville*, he had given a paper to his brother *Monsieur*, in which he
named

named him lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and entrusted him with the government, in the case of his being out of a situation to exercise his authority. That paper was afterwards returned by Monsieur to the king, in the year 1790. But when the royal family were preparing to set out for Varennes, in June 1791, the king told M. de Ferfen, who was in the secret of the journey, that he would give to him a writing, to the same effect with the former, to be delivered to his brother Monsieur, to be made use of by him in case the king himself should be stopped, and deprived of his authority. The hurry of his departure having prevented his majesty from writing this paper, he charged M. de Ferfen, who accompanied him part of the way, to go to *Monsieur*, wherever he might be, and instruct him verbally of his positive intentions ; and to assure him, that he (the king) would send the paper in question, signed by himself, as soon as he should have it in his power to transmit it.

M. de Ferfen fulfilled his commission, when he joined the princes at Bruxelles, after the king was stopped, on which Monsieur wrote to the baron de Breteuil. The letter was dated July 2, 1791. 'That he had received positive information that it was the king's intention, that he, in conjunction with his brother the count d'Artois, should treat with foreign powers respecting the means of procuring the king's liberty, and whatever might concern the re-establishment of order and was for the good of the state; consequently that the baron de Breteuil must now consider the powers, which he had formerly been invested with, as revoked; and in future he must take no steps, for the king's service, but those prescribed by the king's brothers.'

A few days after, Monsieur received those powers, in writing, from the king, dated July 7, 1791.

The baron de Breteuil answered Monsieur, that he would soon join the princes, and would act conformably to their intentions. He accordingly met them at Bonn,
in

in their way to Coblentz. He did not then hesitate to acknowledge "that his powers were revoked;" but he intreated Monsieur to leave him in possession of the writing containing them, which he valued as the most honourable recompence of his long services. At the same time he gave his word of honour to make no farther use of it, and never to interfere in the affairs of France or of the princes, but in conformity with the orders he might hereafter receive from them.

Notwithstanding all this, and in spite of the fresh orders from the king, delivered to the baron by M. de Viomenil, in the end of the year 1791, not to act in any respect but in concert with the king's brothers and the marechal de Castries, it is asserted, that after the fatal 10th of August 1792, he recommenced a correspondence, in the king's name, with the different courts, as if he had been invested with fresh powers; and that, without consulting the princes, he sent the viscount de Caraman to Berlin, and the marquis de Bombelles to Petersburg;

but the empress formally refused to acknowledge him, and continued to treat with M. d'Esterhazy, who represented the princes at the court of Russia, as the baron de Roll did at the court of Prussia.

When the baron de Breteuil found that the king of Prussia and the emperor were determined to acknowledge Monsieur regent of the kingdom, he wrote to their majesties, that he was in possession of very important papers upon that subject; and that he would join them at the armies if they would suspend their resolution till his arrival. At the same time he gave Monsieur to understand, that he would throw no obstacle in the way of his regency, provided he would entrust him to fulfil the king's intentions respecting the choice of the members of his council.

However, he indirectly informed both their majesties and the princes, that it was the presence of M. de Calonne only which prevented his immediately concurring in their views.

The

The princes were embarrassed how to act, when M. de Calonne, who had always declared that he would retire as soon as the princes were ready to enter France, said to their highnesses, "That since his attendance, which proceeded from motives of disinterested attachment only, was supposed to form the least obstacle to Monsieur's assuming the title of regent, he would, with their permission, retire for the present;" adding, "that he was sorry to find, that in spite of the disposition he had manifested to conciliate the baron de Breteuil, that gentleman still continued inimical." M. de Calonne then set off, carrying with him the gratitude of the royal brothers, and the esteem of many officers of the army. Baron de Breteuil arrived soon after at Verdun; and immediately began to act as if invested with the whole authority. He disregarded his former engagement; and, in the name of the king and queen, opposed the regency which was about to be declared.

That minister's hatred against M. de Calonne, and the prejudice which he raised in the queen's mind against him, contri-

buted but too much to the revolution ; therefore, the origin of this fatal quarrel cannot be considered as foreign to these Memoirs. I received a general account of it, at the time it happened, from M. de Montmorin, who was an intimate friend of M. le Noir ; and the particulars were since communicated to me by M. de Calonne himself ; and are as follows :

In the year 1783, the baron de Breteuil and M. de Calonne, being called to the ministry about the same time, formed betwixt themselves a treaty of alliance ; the strict observance of which would have been for the advantage of both.

It was agreed, among other articles, that in case one of them should, at any time, imagine that he had just cause of complaint against the other, he was directly to come to an explanation.

This good understanding was kept up nearly two years, and contributed to give fresh vigour to the government, which had suffered great relaxation under an almost uninterrupted succession of weak ministers ever since the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth.

This

This union was broken by a misunderstanding which took place between the two ministers, on occasion of an intrigue that was set on foot to overturn M. de Calonne, and put M. Foulon in his place. This scheme was contrived by some of the principal members of the parliament; some meetings about it were held at the hôtel de Choiseul; the duchess of Grammont seemed to connive at it, being eager to promote whatever might effect a general overturn of the ministry, in the hope of seeing her brother re-established in his former situation. This must appear the more shocking, because M. de Calonne had lately persuaded the king to advance three millions of livres to the duke de Choiseul, for two years, without interest, on condition of his giving a sufficient security, that being the only means of saving him from bankruptcy: the queen had first suggested this, and afterwards promoted it by her influence, in gratitude to the duke, to whom she considered herself as indebted for her situation of queen of France.

M. de Calonne had notice of Foulon's scheme, through some of his friends; and

all the particulars were afterwards discovered by the agents of police. M. le Noir, then lieutenant of police, gave an account in his daily reports, addressed to the baron de Breteuil, of every new circumstance relating to this affair. The king was, or ought to have been informed of it, as it was the duty of the baron, in quality of minister of Paris, to lay these reports before his majesty.

Several days elapsed after the discovery of the plot, without the king's taking any notice of it to M. de Calonne, who was surprised on that account; at last, his majesty not only spoke of it, but reproached M. de Calonne for not having mentioned the affair to him, and particularly the intrigues which were carried on at the hôtel de Choiseul. He answered, in his justification, that being convinced that the king must be informed of every circumstance of it by the reports of M. le Noir, he had refrained from speaking, in the hopes that his majesty would speak first, and condescend to shew some interest in a thing which concerned him so much.

“There is not a word of it in the reports of M. le Noir, presented to me by the baron de Breteuil,” said the king; “and my reason for not mentioning the affair till to-day, is merely because I was ignorant of it yesterday.”

M. de Calonne, never imagining that the baron de Breteuil could have any motive for concealing this plot from the king, supposed that his majesty had not read the reports with attention: he happened to have some of them in his pocket, which he gave to the king, who, on reading them, was equally surprised and displeased to find facts there, of which he was entirely unacquainted. He compared these with the reports of the same date given him by the baron de Breteuil, and was extremely irritated on perceiving them entirely different.

M. de Calonne endeavoured to justify his colleague, who, he said, could not intend to deceive his majesty, but had probably only deferred mentioning the affair till it was cleared up.

“That

“That is no excuse,” answered the king, hastily; “he ought never to give me a false, or an unexact report; and I desire you will order M. le Noir, in my name, to send the reports henceforward directly to me.”

M. de Calonne, after having in vain represented to the king how very much this would mortify the baron, who must look upon it as a disgrace, excused himself from undertaking the commission, saying it was not the province of the minister of finance to transmit his majesty's orders to the lieutenant of police: if, therefore, he were to be the carrier of that order, the baron would accuse him of being the suggester of it. But if his majesty persisted in his intention, it would be better that he gave the order himself to M. le Noir, either verbally or in writing.

“Well,” said the king, “only desire le Noir to address one of his reports to me; and, after receiving it, I shall write to him to continue to send them always to me. In the mean time, I'll speak to the
baron

baron de Breteuil ; but, until then, do you say nothing to him of what has passed."

M. le Noir, in obedience to the king's orders, notified by M. de Calonne, next day addressed the report of the police directly to his majesty.

On the same day, the king wrote to le Noir the letter which he had agreed upon with M. de Calonne, enjoining him to continue to address the reports directly to him, till farther orders. The valet charged with this letter, not finding M. le Noir at home, unluckily went to the baron de Breteuil's hotel, where he made himself be announced *de la part du Roi*, on which the folding doors of the apartment where the baron was were thrown open, according to custom, and the messenger entered.

The minister was transacting business with the lieutenant of police : he advanced with eagerness to receive the king's letter ; but was told that it was for M. le Noir : M. le Noir took it, and modestly put it into his pocket.

" Read

"Read it, read your letter," said the baron, in an imperious tone.

"I shall read it at home, sir," answered M. le Noir.

"No, no, sir, when a lieutenant of police receives a letter from the king, he ought to read it instantly; and every thing else must be postponed."

M. le Noir no longer hesitated; and, having read the letter, he was again going to put it into his pocket, when the baron asked him drily what the contents were.

"I am not authorised to communicate them, sir," answered M. le Noir.

"And pray, sir," said the baron, "how long is it since you began to receive letters from the king?"

"This is the first."

"And has the king forbid you to communicate it to me?"

"No, sir, but——"

"But, but," said the baron, "a letter from the king to the lieutenant of police ought not to be a secret to the minister of Paris."

Saying

Saying this, he snatched the letter from M. le Noir, before he was aware, and read it.

"How long, sir," said the baron, "have you been in the habit of sending your reports to his majesty?"

"I have only sent one," answered le Noir.

"And for what reason, if you please, sir, did you send that one?"

"Because I received an order from his majesty for so doing."

"By whom did you receive the order?"

"I am not at liberty to mention it."

"Ah! it is a secret, is it? Very well, sir, that's sufficient: we shall see."

M. le Noir put up his papers and withdrew, leaving the minister violently agitated and in very bad humour.

As soon as M. le Noir was gone, the baron ordered his carriage, and drove to Versailles. He alighted at the hotel of M. de Vergennes, whom he firmly believed to have been the instigator of the mortification he had received; and he complained

of the injury in the most vehement terms.

But as the king had not said a single word to M. de Vergennes on this subject, that minister was astonished at the baron's emotion, and could not give him the least explanation; so that he returned to Paris as much in the dark, and more dissatisfied than when he left it.

M. de Calonne being informed of this scene by M. de Vergennes, on whom he called a few minutes after the baron had left him, immediately dispatched a courier to M. le Noir, desiring him to give the baron an exact account of all that had passed.

The latter, still impatient to clear up the mystery, arrived at the *Hotel de Police* about an hour after M. de Calonne's courier; and, immediately on his beginning to question M. le Noir, the letter was communicated to him; and he was afterwards informed of every circumstance by that gentleman, who repeated word for word the conversation with the king as M. de Calonne had represented it to him.

The

The baron, who had been for two days a prey to doubts and surmises, was now fully convinced that a plot had been formed for his ruin ; and, however clear and natural the relation which M. le Noir made to him was, he could perceive nothing in the whole of it but what his prejudice and resentment was in search of, namely, treachery and an enemy. From that moment, the baron breathed hatred and vengeance against M. de Calonne. Instead of desiring an explanation according to their mutual agreement, he only thought of the means of revenging this supposed treachery. With this view, he represented the affair to the queen as a piece of malice levelled at her majesty : that M. de Calonne, from his intimacy with M. le Noir, and having the direction of the reports of the police all addressed to the king, would have the queen herself, in a great measure, in his power ; and might give such a representation of even her most innocent actions as would entirely ruin her in the king's esteem.

The queen, who had no knowledge of the motives for the order given to M. le Noir, yielded implicit faith to the baron de Breteuil's suggestions. Of course she was extremely irritated against M. de Calonne; and went directly to the king's apartment, where she complained to his majesty, with great bitterness, of that minister, and of M. le Noir. The king fell a laughing; and assured her, "that there was not a word of truth in the absurd story which she was so simple as to be alarmed at."

This assurance was far from undeceiving the queen; she inflexibly repelled every explanation tending to justify M. de Calonne; and remained firmly convinced that he had formed the rash design of which the baron de Breteuil accused him.

In this manner, that princess was made the instrument of an unjust vengeance; and, from that period, she took every opportunity of injuring M. de Calonne. Ah! could she have foreseen the fatal consequences of his disgrace which she was so earnest in accelerating.

Return-

Returning to the commission of Mallet du Pan, I must now relate the precautions which the king had desired me to use respecting the letter I was to give to him for the mareschal de Castries: this letter was open, without address; and so contrived, that in case of his being arrested, and the letter found on him, and sent to the assembly, nothing in it would have betrayed that it was intended for any other than Mallet du Pan himself.

This letter was of course very vague, and apparently insignificant, particularly as I knew very little of M. de Castries, and had never written to him before; it was conceived nearly in the subsequent terms:

“The bearer of this letter, sir, is intrusted by, and acquainted with the views of a family to whom you are much attached. With the fullest reliance on your zeal, I recommend him to you: he has undertaken this journey for the service of that interesting family; and, I am convinced, that when he acquaints you with

the affair in question, you will support his views by every means in your power."

M. Mallet du Pan was particularly desirous to recommend to the foreign powers never to place the emigrants in the foremost ranks, but rather to employ them in garrison. This recommendation was attributed to the apprehensions which they supposed had been suggested to the king of the extravagant claims which the emigrants might make if his majesty was reduced to the humiliation of owing the re-establishment of his authority to their services. Although I am not ignorant that arts were used to inspire both the king and queen with this odious jealousy, I must do them the justice to declare, that I never observed the slightest trace of it in their majesties. On the contrary, I always remarked in them every indication of friendship for the princes, and the warmest concern for the French nobility: above all, they evinced the utmost horror at the idea of a civil war. The king's most ardent desire was, that the
emigrants

emigrants might return into France without bearing the reproach of having shed a drop of their countrymen's blood.

I had contrived a cypher, which it was quite impossible to make out, without the key, which was known only to Mallet du Pan, myself, and M. Malouet, with whom the former was directed occasionally to correspond, to prevent the suspicion which might have arisen from a great many letters from Germany being addressed to me. It was agreed, that as soon as M. Malouet should receive a letter, he was directly to communicate it to me; and that I should transmit a copy of it to the king, as well as of all the letters from Mallet du Pan that came addressed to myself.

A few days after the arrival of Mallet du Pan in Germany, and after his first conferences with the duke of Brunswick, and with the ministers of the courts of Vienna and of Berlin, he wrote to me, that he had reason to be satisfied with the reception he had met with from M. de Castries, who had given him very favourable letters of

recommendation ; but as his commission was only supported by a letter from me, and as my intimacy with the king was not known in Germany, he seemed only to be attended to from deference to M. de Castries ; and, that there was so much circumspection and reserve maintained, that he could promise himself no success unless I could contrive to send him, by a safe conveyance, a few words written by the king himself. He did not require this paper to be signed, as the king's writing was known by those for whom it was intended. I sent the contents of this letter to his majesty, and proposed to him to write the following words on a very small slip of paper :

“ The person who presents this paper, knows my intentions, and credit may be given to what he says in my name.”

The post was a safe enough conveyance at that time, as the custom of stopping and opening letters was not yet introduced. The letter intended to contain this writing was not folded or sealed in any way which could attract the attention of the spies
which

which the assembly kept in the post-offices: it was not to be sent to Mallet du Pan under his own name, but under the assumed name of a German banker. My letter was not in cypher, and did not contain a word of public affairs, or of the king's, but only the circumstantial account of a contest supposed to have taken place betwixt the partners of a commercial house; the matter in question was to bring the affair to an amicable conclusion, through the mediation of the German banker, to whom this letter was supposed to be written.

When the king read the above letter, he no longer apprehended any danger from sending the few lines I desired; he accordingly wrote them, and the letter was dispatched to Mallet du Pan. It produced the desired effect; for when the duke of Brunswick and the ministers from the courts of Vienna and Berlin saw the writing attested by M. de Castries, to be in the king's own hand, they no longer hesitated to explain themselves respecting the plan

of a manifesto which Mallet du Pan proposed to them.

Every article of it was discussed with him, and the first intention was to adopt it; but, at the opening of the campaign, the duke of Brunswick made considerable alterations in the manifesto; the effect of which did not answer his intentions. His menaces were laughed at, except by the few who had the simplicity to imagine that his triumphant army would be at the gates of Paris in eight days. But, in general, so far from inspiring terror and repressing sedition, this ill-judged manifesto excited the most lively indignation; and the king was supposed to have suggested those articles which regarded the safety of his own person and family.

If Mallet du Pan had been present when the alterations in the manifesto were proposed, he would have certainly represented all the ill effect they were likely to produce; but he was then in Switzerland, having considered his mission as entirely con-

concluded when his plan of a manifesto had been approved of and apparently adopted. When I heard of his departure from Germany, I wrote to him by the king's orders, desiring him to return to Frankfort; but neither that letter, nor one which I wrote a few days after, with fresh instructions, ever were received by him; and I am ignorant what became of them. But into whatever hands they fell, nothing could be made of them, being both written in cypher, and addressed to one of his assumed names.

As it was by no means proper to allow Mallet du Pan to make so long a journey at his own expence, the king authorised me to give him the sum of two thousand crowns, which he thought too much, and would only receive on condition of his keeping an account of his expences, and returning the remainder.

The civil list was, at this period, greatly exhausted by the enormous expence which the clothing, &c. of the king's new guards occasioned; also by the assistance granted
to

to several gentlemen who had been ruined by the revolution, and by M. de la Port's daily payments for secret services.

His majesty having expressed to me some uneasiness upon the impending failure of the civil list, I considered in what manner I could procure a sum of money, which was by no means an easy matter in the present circumstances, because the king could not then take up money by any public act without extreme danger.

Luckily, I was informed by one of my brothers, who was a knight of Malta, that the order to which he belonged still retained in their possession the eight hundred thousand livres which they had engaged to pay for the contribution *patriotique*, on condition that the national assembly would decree the inviolability of the property belonging to that order; but as this decree never had been passed, and very probably never would, that money was still at the disposal of the order. These considerations appeared to me sufficient to induce the order of Malta to lend his majesty part of

the sum destined for the payment of the patriotic contribution ; and I commissioned my brother to make the proposal to the commander, who was procureur general of the order. He very readily agreed to it, and it met with no obstacle from the baillie de Virieu, whose consent was also necessary, as he was at that time ambassador of the order in France. In short, after a negotiation of two days, I had it in my power to send the king a sum of five hundred thousand livres, at the moment when he least expected it. His majesty gave me a receipt, made out in my name, under which I wrote, " that the sum was lent me by the order of Malta, according to my agreement with the procureur general." This paper I kept with great care, in a secret and safe place, till the 10th of August. I then returned it to that brave and loyal chevalier.

M. de Bouillé's statement of the king's journey from Châlons to Varennes, when his majesty and the royal family left Paris to go to Montmidi.

“ In consequence of the king and queen's order, M. de Bouillé informed M. de Goguelas, an officer of rank, of their majesties' intention to go to Montmidi, and the arrangements he had made to receive them. That officer had been sent to Paris a little before the king left it, and brought his majesty's definitive orders to the general; in obedience to which he had ordered M. de Goguelas to reconnoitre the different posts on their route, and to wait personally for their majesties at Pontsommeville, the first post after passing Chalons, and three leagues beyond that town. M. de Goguelas carried a written order from the king, for the commander of the detachment at Chalons to obey M. de N——, who was to arrive there twelve hours before the royal family. M. de N—— himself was authorised by his majesty to deliver the orders of M. de Bouillé to each officer commanding a detachment on this service,

service, and at the same time to give them particular orders conformable to any new circumstance which might have occurred since that general had formed his plan.

“ M. de N—— or M. de Goguelas were to arrive at each post from Pontsommeville, at a proper time previous to the royal family, to give the commanding officers timely notice that the troops, and everything else necessary for the speedy and safe passage of the carriages, should be in readiness all the way; M. de Bouillé, in the mean time, being in a central position, that he might have it in his power to protect the royal family, in case of necessity.

“ Agreeable to this plan, M. de Goguelas had left Varennes to go to Pontsommeville on the 20th of June, with forty hussars of the regiment of Laufun, on the pretext of escorting a large sum of money expected for the use of the troops. These hussars were under the command of M. Boudet, a lieutenant. They passed the night of the 20th at St. Menchault, and arrived on the 21st at Pontsommeville. Forty dragoons of the regiment royal, command-

ed by M. d'Andouin their captain, arrived on the same day at St. Menehault. A detachment of a hundred dragoons of the regiment of Monsieur, and sixty of the regiment royal, came on the 20th to Clermont, on pretence of going into cantonments at Mouson on the Meuse, but with orders to remain, on the 21st, at Clermont. They were under the command of M. de Damas. Sixty hussars of the regiment of Laufun, commanded by M. Rodwel a lieutenant, were posted at Varennes; a hundred of the same regiment, under the command of M. Deslong, at Dun; fifty of the regiment of Royal Allemand, under M. Guntzer, were placed at Mousse, a village between Dun and Stenai. This last were intended to have escorted the royal family all the way to Montmidi, where his majesty would have found several regiments ready to form an encampment, which some others, already on their march, were to join on the 21st and 22d. Some of the commanding officers of those detachments were privy to the plan; the others were in hourly expectation of meeting with the military

Money chest with the money. They had orders to hold their troops in constant readiness, to watch attentively over every occurrence that should take place at their respective posts. A courier, who preceded the carriage of the royal family some hours, was to give these commanding officers timely notice of the king's arrival.

"The orders signed by the king, and to be presented successively to each detachment by M. de N—— and M. de Goguelas, enjoined the officers and soldiers to escort the king and his family, and to use every means in their power for their protection. Those two gentlemen were to inform the king, when he arrived at Pontsommeville, of the disposition of the troops intended for his escort, and his majesty was then to give them orders respecting the manner in which he wished to continue his route.

"In case the king thought proper to let himself be known, each detachment was to keep close to the carriage all the way, till it was relieved by the succeeding detachment
at

at the new post : but if the king preferred remaining *incognito*, his carriage was to pass for that which carried the military chest. The detachments were to fall behind at convenient distances, to give the king's party time to change horses without suspicion ; at the same time not to lose sight, or to be at too great a distance for giving assistance in case of need. In either of those suppositions, the officers who commanded the detachments were to be informed by M. de Choiseuil or Goguelas, at the king's arrival at each post, that his majesty was in the carriage : but it was only in case he did not think it necessary to preserve the *incognito* that the private men of the detachments were to be informed. All the detachments were to proceed to Montmidi, after the king's passage, with all possible expedition, except that at Pontsommeville, which was to stop at St. Menehault for eighteen or twenty hours, on purpose to prevent any person, of whatever description, from proceeding during that time. M. de Bouillé was to take measures, during the
same

same period, for preventing any intelligence from arriving at his camp ; and by this means secured to the detachment at St. Meneshoult a safe retreat to Montmedi.

“ As the cross road from Varennes to Dun was bad, M. de Bouillé had the precaution to place a sufficient number of horses at the former, that the king, on his arrival, might find no difficulty or retardment to prevent his proceeding to Dun. Those horses belonged to M. de N——, and were sent on the pretext of carrying his camp-equipage to Mouson. When M. de N—— went to Paris to receive the king's orders, he had given directions to an officer of his regiment respecting those horses, which were to set out on the 17th of June, that they might be at Varennes on the 20th, and there remain till farther orders. This arrangement had been settled, on the supposition that the king would leave Paris on the 19th, as was at first intended : but a woman in the service of the Dauphin, and known to be a violent democrat, being to finish her

weekly attendance on the 20th, it was thought prudent to defer the departure of the royal family till she should be out of the palace; of course they did not set out till the 20th, at midnight. M. de Bouillé was informed of this alteration by a letter from the king, which, however, he did not receive before the 15th, in the evening, and immediately sent orders to the regiment royal and that of Monsieur, both dragoons, to begin their march a day later than had been formerly directed, on purpose that they might be at Clermont only one day previous to the arrival of the royal family: but unfortunately the officer, entrusted with the direction of the horses, which were said to transport M. de N——'s camp equipage, neglected to give fresh orders to those who conducted them to Varennes, and of course they arrived at that town one day sooner than was intended. The prolongation of their stay created those suspicions which afterwards proved so fatal. Those horses were not placed where it had been agreed upon they should; and

and when those who were charged with the placing them arrived at Varennes, the suspicions which had arisen on their account had excited such a fermentation, that it would not have been prudent to have attempted any alteration."

The report of M. Boudet.

"The detachments arrived in precise time at the place of their destination. The hussars of the regiment of Lausun came to St. Meneshoult on the 20th of June; the officer quartered them at the inn, but he neglected to give the usual information to the magistrates of the place relative to their route and quarters. This occasioned a good deal of surprise and speculation in the town, which were augmented by the arrival of a detachment of the king's regiment of dragoons in the morning of the 21st. The impression which the conduct of the officer commanding the hussars left on the minds of the inhabitants, made them watch the dragoons with jealous eyes.

They even attempted to take their arms from them.

“ The king left the Thuilleries on the 20th, at midnight. His carriage broke down near Chalons. That accident detained him several hours. The royal family were expected at Sommeville about three o'clock in the afternoon of the 21st. Although M. de N—— and M. de Goguelas had calculated that they would arrive about that hour, it was certainly their duty to remain there all that day with the detachment of hussars, the instructions to whose commanding officers bore, that the convoy they were to escort would pass in the *course* of that day : nevertheless, when those two gentlemen saw no appearance of any courier, or of the arrival of the royal family, they left Sommeville at five o'clock in the evening, carrying the whole detachment from that important post, from whence the directions to all the others were to originate. It is to be hoped that those two officers had very strong reasons for conducting themselves

selves in this manner, which, however, have never been fully made known. It has been said, that what chiefly determined them was certain marks of inquietude and commotion which began to appear among the people in the country, the consequences of which they thought might prove dangerous to the king and royal family.

“ Messrs. de N—— and Goguelas withdrew the troops from Sommeville at five o'clock in the evening, and their majesties arrived there an hour after, finding neither the troops they expected, nor the two persons who had been entrusted with their instructions, who were to act as couriers, and to give orders, signals, and directions to the troops distributed at the different posts. Their majesties, however, proceeded without any retardment to St. Menchoult, while the detachment which had left Sommeville fell back to Varennes. By a fatality that seems to have invariably accompanied the king, the commanding officer of the detachment, not choosing to return to St.

Menchoult, where he had been ill received the day before, instead of keeping to the high road, by which means he would have joined the royal family, struck into a cross road, where he lost his way, as also did the two persons entrusted with the king's orders: so that none of them reached Varennes until an hour after their majesties had been arrested.

“ The royal family had come to St. Menchoult without any preceding courier. When they stopped to change horses at the post-house, the commanding officer of the detachment of dragoons, supposing that those were the carriages which it was his duty to escort, ordered the soldiers to mount, that he might fulfil the object of his mission. He met with a decided opposition from the inhabitants, and the stables were occupied and guarded by the national guards of the town.

“ The king not seeing those he expected, looked out of the carriage with the utmost uneasiness, and made many inquiries concerning the road. He was recognized by
a post-

a postillion, who immediately ran and informed the post-master. The king's journey was not, however, stopped ; he went on to Clermont, while the post-master of St. Menehoult dispatched his son to Varennes, to give notice of his majesty's approach, that measures might be taken to stop him. The king changed horses again at Clermont, and was suffered peaceably to take the road to Varennes. M. de Damas, who commanded the royal dragoons and those of Monsieur, expected the arrival of the courier every moment, according to agreement, and he kept his troops in readiness, but had not been able to make any other preparations for the arrival of their majesties. However, on being informed that two carriages, of which they gave him the description, had changed horses at the post-house, he had no doubt of their being those of the king and queen. He immediately gave orders to his dragoons to mount. The district and municipality of the place were alarmed, and he was desired to give an account of this unexpected order. M.

de Damas, without returning an answer, set spurs to his horse, ordering his dragoons to follow him : but they, yielding to the threats and intreaties of the national guards, basely deserted their commanding officer. M. de Damas pursued alone the road to Varennes, and arrived a few minutes after their majesties.

“ The son of the postmaster of St. Menehoul got the start of the king by some hours. His departure from that town had been observed by one of the quarter-masters of the regiment royal, who was in the secret, and who, suspecting the young man’s intentions, found means to escape the watchful observations of the populace, and of his own companions, and pursued the fellow, in order to prevent his fatal design. He followed him for about a league : but being afraid to push his horse, which had a great way to go, he did not overtake him ; and the fellow, perceiving himself pursued, suddenly quitted the high road, escaped into the woods, and through unbeaten tracks, known to himself, proceeded to Varennes.

rennes. He arrived betwixt ten and eleven o'clock at night, and, with as little noise as possible, he awaked every person he thought necessary for his project, and harricaded with carts and waggons the bridge of Varennes, which separated the *ville haute* from the *ville basse*.

“ In the midst of these preparations their majesties arrived at the *ville haute*, and stopped at the first house, in hopes of finding fresh horses ready for them : but in this they were disappointed ; the horses intended for them were still at an inn on the opposite side of the bridge. M. de Bouillé had sent his youngest son and M. de Raigecourt to Varennes on the morning of the 21st, with orders to make the necessary preparations for the king's arrival. They had not sufficient confidence in the officer who commanded the detachment at Varennes to trust him with the secret, but they desired him to hold his troops in readiness to escort a convoy. They anxiously expected the arrival of the courier, as their orders were to make no preparation till he came. Besides, their

their very appearance in the town had created suspicions, and the fear of increasing them prevented their removing the horses from the *ville basse* to the *ville haute*, until they should receive notice of the king's arrival. The officer who commanded the detachment at Varennes had orders to escort a convoy which was of so much importance, that in case he perceived any disposition in the people to obstruct it, he was to order his troops to mount, make himself master of all the passages, and enforce the advancement of the convoy. But as none of these measures were executed, the post-master had full time to make all his criminal arrangements, without encountering the least obstacle.

“ Their majesties were very uneasy on being informed, on their arrival, that there were no horses in readiness, and saw no appearance of the troops they expected for their protection. To add to their vexation, their postillions threatened to leave them. The queen alighted, and called at several houses to obtain information respecting the horses. Nobody knew her. She walked
for

for some time in the *ville haute* with the king, in expectation that some person would appear who would give them the information they stood so much in need of, but all in vain. They were obliged to return to their carriage without the expected satisfaction; and all they could do was to intreat the postillions to proceed with the same horses. As they passed under an arch-way near the bridge, a band of ruffians, who lay in wait, stopped the carriages, seized upon the king, and forced him and his family to alight, and they were conducted prisoners to the house of the *procureur de la commune*. The king expostulated against this violence with equal firmness and dignity, but to no purpose. In a moment the streets were barricaded, the stables of the hussars surrounded, the national guards drawn up under arms, and the tocsin sounded to alarm the country. The young de Bouillé and M. Raigecourt, on hearing the tumult, hastened towards the hotel of the commandant, but found the streets barricaded. They had time only to mount on horse-back,

back, to push through the armed crowds that opposed them, and to go with all possible expedition to inform general de Bouillé of what had happened.

“ In less than an hour after the king was stopped, Messrs. de N—— and de Goguelas arrived at Varennes with the detachment from Pontsommeville. At the gates of the town they found some pieces of cannon and a party of the national guards, who at first disputed their entrance. They desired to be made known to the sixty hussars in the town, who belonged to their regiment. M. Rodwell, who commanded those hussars, came to meet them alone. M. Boudet, the commanding officer of the detachment from Pontsommeville, informed him that the company which had been stopped was actually the king and the royal family, and ordered him to take every necessary measure for the defence and surety of their majesties : but Rodwell, in place of obeying his commanding officer, immediately left Varennes, on pretence that he must go and inform M. de Bouillé of what had happened ;

pened ; and he left the command of this important post to one of the quarter-masters, who was extremely ill-affected to the king, as appeared by his keeping the hussars in total inaction.

“ The detachment of Pontsommevelle being the only troops well disposed to the king in the town, reached the house where the royal family were detained, which they found furrounded by a number of national guards. M. de Goguelas, instead of attempting to disperse them by any orders to the detachment, addressed himself to the *procureur de la commune*, who still affected not to know who the people he detained were, desiring to be introduced to them. He was introduced accordingly, and on his return assured the people that it was unquestionably the royal family. This information rendered the multitude more obstinate for detaining the royal family.

“ M. de Goguelas, wishing to ascertain whether the minds of the troops had not been corrupted by the town's-people, during

ring his absence, ordered them to prepare their arms *, and then very inconsiderately asked whether they were for the king or the nation. They answered, "*Vive la nation ! Nous tenons et tiendrons toujours pour elle.*"

"This answer, which the surrounding crowd had inspired them with, plainly shewed no assistance could be expected for his majesty in this seditious town. M. de Goguelas therefore, seeming to adopt the prevailing sentiment, resolved quietly to wait the arrival of a sufficient force, to assist him in delivering their majesties.

"While these events were passing at Varennes, M. de Bouillé was extremely uneasy at receiving no intelligence. He had passed the night on horseback betwixt Dun and Stenai. At last he rode to the highway which leads to Montmedi, that he might be at hand to give assistance, if necessary. He was at the gates of Stenai about four in the morning, when M. de Raigecourt, the chevalier de Bouillé, and M. de Rodwell brought him the unwelcome

* *Mettre haut les armes.*

news of the king being stopped. That instant, orders were given for the regiment *royal Allemand* to mount, but the horses were not saddled, although their commanding officer had received orders the preceding evening to hold himself in readiness by day-break, and although it was known in the regiment that the king was to pass during the night. M. de Bouillé sent, at the same time, to Montmedi, an order to M. de Klinglin, *marechal de camp*, to send one of the battalions of Nassau towards Dun, and to expedite orders to the Swiss regiment of Castellás, then on its march to Montmedi, to detach one of its battalions to Stenai, and there to attend his farther orders. M. de Bouillé also sent orders to the detachments of Mousé and Dun to march with all diligence to Varennes, giving them to know that he would soon follow with the regiment *royal Allemand*, and enjoining them, immediately upon their arrival, to use every means in their power for the deliverance of the royal family.

“ M, de

“ M. de Bouillé waited till the regiment of *royal Allemand* were quite ready, and then put himself at its head ; after which, that he might assure himself of its dispositions, he read the king’s orders, informed the men of the occasion of this march, and distributed money amongst them. He found them extremely well disposed, and they followed him with an alacrity which promised success : but it was five o’clock in the morning when they set out.”

Extract of M. de Long’s report.

“ M. de Long, who commanded, at this time, the detachment of Dun, occupied, with his hussars, all the streets and avenues of that town. On being informed, by M. Rodwell, of the distressing situation of the royal family, he marched to Varennes with his troops, without waiting the general’s orders, leaving twenty-four men and an officer at Dun, in order to secure a free passage through that town. He was only an hour and a half in going five leagues betwixt Dun and Varennes. He arrived before this
last

last town at five o'clock in the morning. His project had been to begin the attack immediately, and to make his way by force to the king; but when he reached the town, he perceived the barricades, which forced him to renounce his plan. The advanced post of the national guard required of M. de Long to attend them to the municipality, and explain the motives of his journey to Varennes. This he positively refused, and demanded entrance with his detachment, in order to join that which was in the town. They answered, that his demand was contrary to the king's orders. M. de Long being assured, by this answer, that the king was at Varennes, requested permission to pay his respects to his majesty. This was agreed to by M. Seignemont, commander of the national guards and chevalier de St. Lewis, who promised him protection, and gave his word of honour that he should be allowed to speak to the king, without any witness. For the greater surety that this promise would be adhered to, M. de Long exacted that an host-

age should be delivered to his hussars. This was done. His scheme was to inform the king of the succours that were arrived and expected, and to observe whether it would be possible to force the barricades sword in hand. He found them so strong, particularly on the bridge, that he had no hopes of succeeding, unless he was joined by the hussars under the command of M. Boudet. Having arrived at the house in which the royal family were confined, he saw, to his astonishment, thirty hussars before it, commanded by one of the national guards; and this certitude of their defection deprived him of all hopes of his detachment's being allowed to enter the town. After waiting half an hour, he was introduced to the king. Seignemont, contrary to the word he had pledged, entered with him. When M. de Long reproached him in the presence of his majesty, his only apology was, that the citizens would not allow that he should have any private conference with the king; yet he afterwards permitted M. de Long to talk a little, in the corner of the room, with

his majesty, who was then informed of his real situation, and of the unsurmountable obstacles which the barricades, and the defection of some of the troops, formed to the zeal of M. de Long. He was informed, at the same time, of the march of M. de Bouillé, at the head of the Royal Allemand.

“The king seemed in such a state of confusion, that M. de Long repeated this information three times, from an apprehension that his majesty had not heard what he had said. At last he begged to have his majesty's orders for M. de Bouillé.

“ ‘ You may acquaint him,’ said the king, ‘ that I am a prisoner; that I doubt much whether he can do any thing for me, but that I desire he may do what he can.’ ”

“ M. de Long spoke also to the queen : but as she stood very near to the commander of the national guards, he gave her the same information in German, that he had given to the king. That unhappy prince

princess complained bitterly of her persecutors, and particularly that they would not permit her to proceed to Verdun, where she and the children could more commodiously repose themselves.

“The king desiring M. de Long not to prolong the conversation in German, to prevent suspicions, he took leave of their majesties, asking their orders aloud. The king replied,

“ ‘I am a prisoner, and have no orders to give.’

“M. de Long having arrived at his detachment, sent a non-commissioned officer with an order to M. Boudet to attack those who confined the royal family, while he should force the barricades, and advance with his troops to their assistance. After a considerable interval, the non-commissioned officer returned, without having been able to speak to M. de Boudet, who, with his detachment, was blocked up in the convent and garden of the Cordeliers.

“In those circumstances, M. de Long had no other resource but to wait for the

arrival of the regiment of Royal Allemand: but he soon understood that the royal family, having been obliged to go into their carriages, were on the road to Paris, guarded by an armed multitude. He was joined by the chevalier de R——, and they endeavoured to cross the river, in the intention of attacking the escort and delivering the king. They actually passed the first branch, but found the second too deep; and seeing no possibility of succouring the royal family, they determined to join M. de Bouillé; which they did, about nine o'clock in the morning, near Varennes. Greatly shocked at the information they brought, he was still inclined to continue his march, and make a last attempt, but no person among the troops knew of any ford by which they could pass the river which separated them from the king. The horses were nearly exhausted with the long march they had already made, Stenai being more than five leagues from Varennes; besides, the king having set out about an hour and

a half before, all pursuit seemed useless. There was therefore an absolute impossibility of delivering the royal family ; and M. de Bouillé, overwhelmed with grief, marched back with his troops to Stenai."

Besides the above statement, M. de Bouillé drew up a particular account, explanatory of the failure of this plan, for protecting the royal family in their journey from Paris to Montmedi, for the information of their majesties*.

* *Vide Appendix, No. X.*

CHAP. XXV.

The decree of accusation issued against Larivière intimidates his colleagues.—Madame de Lamoignon's Memoirs are secretly burnt at Seves.—Consequences.—A band of ruffians, in the pay of the Jacobins, are employed to excite popular commotions.—The assembly pass a decree for disbanding the king's constitutional guards; and on the same day, one of accusation against the duke de Brissac.—The ministers oblige the king to sanction the decree for disbanding the guards.—My letter, advising his majesty to refuse his sanction, arrives too late.

AFTER the decree of accusation against the judge Larivière, none of his colleagues durst venture to continue the legal proceedings on my complaint and that of M. de Montmorin. But one principal object we had in view was accomplished, namely, to render the imposture of the

Austrian committee manifest to the public. This fable had been invented soon after the opening of the first assembly, with a design to exasperate the people against the king, the queen, and all their faithful servants. The Jacobins, enraged at being deprived of that ground of calumny, watched for an opportunity of reviving it, and for that purpose they made a handle of a piece of imprudence committed by one of the clerks of a public office.

M. de la Porte had purchased, by the king's orders, the whole edition of the Memoirs of the famous madame de Lamothe, so full of calumny against the queen. He ordered them to be burnt with all the precaution and secrecy possible. The clerk who received the order had the imprudence to confide the execution of it to one named *Riston*, an intriguing and seditious man, formerly an advocate at Nancy, who had committed several forgeries, and even fabricated the king's seal, for which he had been prosecuted before the tribunal of *Ré-
quêtes de l'Hotel*, where I myself, as a *maitre
des*

des réquêtes, was employed in his cross examination. On that occasion I ran considerable danger, not only from the populace, who, being convoked by his handbills, filled the court, but also by the fury of the fellow himself, who attempted to assault me during the trial, and was with some difficulty prevented by the *buisfiers*. He was acquitted, in consequence of the new principles of patriotism then in vogue, but every body was convinced of his guilt. This same Riston, finding himself entrusted with a commission which interested the king, and appeared of the more importance on account of the mysterious manner in which it was ordered to be executed, was less solicitous to perform it effectually, than to make an ostentatious display of the confidence that had been placed in him. On the 30th of May, at ten o'clock in the morning, he ordered the Memoirs to be conveyed in a waggon, which he himself accompanied, to the china manufactory at Seves, where he caused a large fire to be made, and burnt the Memoirs in the presence

sence of all the workmen of the manufactory, who were expressly forbid to approach the fire. His ostentatious precautions awakened curiosity, and gave rise to a thousand different conjectures. The fire kindled at Sêves was immediately made use of to inflame the minds of the Parisian populace. That very day it was mentioned in the assembly, that state papers had been carried at M. de la Porte's office, and burnt at Sêves. Brissot and the Jacobin party insisted vehemently that the papers burnt with so much mystery were the registers and letters of correspondence of the very Austrian committee, of whose existence they had so long endeavoured to convince the world.

M. de la Porte was summoned to the bar, and gave a faithful account of the affair as it stood. Riston was also called, who confirmed the deposition of M. de la Porte. But these explanations, satisfactory as they were, did not quiet the ferment which that affair had excited in the assembly. The Gironde party, who for some time had
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in view the *dechéance*, or abdication of the king, and of placing the prince royal on the throne, under a regency composed of their own party, seized eagerly this opportunity to prepare and facilitate the accomplishing their purpose.

The courage and fidelity of the constitutional guards, formed an obstacle to their plan which they wished to remove, although they could have opposed to those guards many thousand armed ruffians, besides a chosen band actually in the pay of the Jacobins.

Buob (the justice of peace before mentioned) gave me the following information on this head:

“The men, thus retained, received, at first, five livres a day: but as their numbers increased, their pay was reduced to forty fous. Deserters, and soldiers who had been turned out of their regiments, were chosen in preference to any others. Their number, in the beginning of March, was seven hundred and fifty, as appeared by an extract from the account of their last payment.

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This band was commanded by a chevalier of St. Lewis, to whom they were forced to take an oath of unlimited obedience on their admission. He himself received his orders from the secret committee of the Jacobins. This new corps mixed with the spectators in the tribunes of the assembly, at the clubs, in the meetings of the sections, and with the groups in the Palais Royal: but their principal service consisted in exciting and supporting popular tumults."

To pave the way to the king's *déchéance* or abdication, the Girondists wished to intimidate him by an insurrection of the populace against the palace; and to render this effectual, they thought it necessary to obtain a decree of the assembly for disbanding the constitutional guards. They made a handle of the fermentation occasioned by the scene at Sèvres, to assert that those guards were in a state of counter-revolution; that they had actually received from the king and queen a white flag, to be
used

used on some proper occasion; but which at present was concealed in a cavern under the *Ecole Militaire*.

The place was searched, and no such flag found. Nothing was found that had any connection with the imaginary committee; yet a decree of accusation was on the point of being passed against all the officers of the king's guard; but the apprehension of exciting the whole corps against the assembly, restrained this; and the decree was confined to the brave and unfortunate duc de Brissac, who was next day conducted to the prison at Orleans, and afterwards massacred with the other prisoners.

The king was perfectly sensible, that the motive of the decree for disbanding his guard, was no other than to deprive him of the protection of those brave men whom it was well known would defend his life at the hazard of their own. He was extremely agitated; and the morning after the decree passed, he sent for his ministers at an early hour, and communicated a letter to them, which he intended to send to the assembly,

assembly, announcing his refusal to sanction the decree : but they all refused to countersign his letter ; and consequently it could not be sent. His majesty then proposed to go in person to the assembly, and pronounce a discourse, in which he would give his reasons for not sanctioning the decree ; but all the ministers refused to attend him to the assembly : they even carried their baseness or perfidy the length of asserting, that every man of the guard would be massacred by the people if they were not immediately disbanded, and that every individual in the palace would be endangered by his majesty's deferring to sanction the decree. In short, the unhappy prince, without taking time to reflect, consented to sanction that fatal decree.

An hour after having signed his sanction, he received my letter : in which, not knowing what had passed, I strongly urged the necessity of his forcing the assembly to adhere to the constitution ; which, in allowing the king to have a guard of 1800 men,

men, had not given the legislative body any authority over it; reminding him that it was to the king alone that all complaints ought to be carried or addressed against the guard in general; and that the authority of the assembly was limited to the receiving complaints, and to issuing decrees of accusation against any individual of that guard who might give grounds for them; and who would of course be tried by the proper courts.

Before I received the king's answer, I heard, with equal regret and surprise, that the decree was already sanctioned; and that the duke of Brissac had been sent as a prisoner to Orleans. He had resisted the earnest entreaties of his family and friends, who suggested to him the means of escape, and thought he could have no security for his life but by flight.

I received the king's answer that evening; it was written with his own hand on the margin of my letter, which was our established form of correspondence. With every letter I wrote, I sent him back that
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which I received from him the day before, only taking notes from it; so that his letters never remained twenty-four hours in my hands. I proposed this method to the king, to prevent his having any uneasiness about his letters. Mine were delivered to the king or queen, and their answers brought to me by one of the captains of the guard, whose zeal and attachment were known to them.

It would have been imputed to their majesties as a crime to carry on any kind of correspondence at this time with me; I judged it highly improper therefore to subject them to the least risk or uneasiness by keeping even copies of the letters which passed on this occasion. Independent of this consideration, it is to be regretted that I did not keep copies of them all, because they would have testified his scrupulous fidelity to the constitution, his affection for his people, and the absolute falshood of the various calumnies invented for the basest purposes against both him and the queen. M. Malouet is the only person now alive
who

who saw the originals of the greatest part of those letters by the king's permission: that gentleman can attest the truth of what I have now said. As I retained notes which could not be understood by those into whose hands I was afraid of the originals falling, I am enabled to subjoin his majesty's answer to my letter respecting the disbanding of the guards, which was in the following terms:

“Unfortunately it is no longer time to do as you propose: the ministers assured me, that the ferment of the people is so violent, that the sanction of the decree could not be deferred without exposing the guards, and every person in the palace, to the greatest danger. I gave this sanction much against my will; but the evil cannot be remedied.”

No remedy indeed remained after the decree was sanctioned; and I was the more distressed at what had happened, as in spite of the defection of the ministers on this occasion, I was convinced that great advantage might have been taken of the

assembly, could the king have been prevailed upon to have acted with energy; and my letter might have had some weight with him, had he received it before he sanctioned the decree.

My intention was to propose to his majesty to go to the assembly, accompanied by six principal officers of his guard, and a hundred guards on horseback; part of which would have remained at the entrance, by the gate of the Feuillans, and part at the *Place de Vendome*, while the remainder would have gone by the quay to the *Place de Lewis XV*. I would have proposed to his majesty to announce his intention of going to the assembly only a quarter of an hour before he went; and, that on his arrival, he should pronounce the following discourse:

“Gentlemen, we have all taken an oath to the constitution; by your’s, you are bound to infringe it in no point; and mine obliges me to maintain it by all the power which the constitution has delegated into my hands. I come here in the execution of
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of that duty to state to yourselves the irregularity of that decree by which my constitutional guards are ordered to be disbanded on account of certain accusations, which, however serious in themselves, and however well-founded, can only criminate a few individuals. That decree is directly in contradiction to the spirit of the constitution, which has ordered and regulated that guard. This article of the constitution is equally binding with all the others: they were all, without exception, adopted by yourselves, and consecrated by the oath of the majority of the nation; and that oath, you as well as me have sworn to adhere to inviolably. By this solemn engagement, it is my duty to declare to you, that I never can sanction the decree for disbanding my guard; and it is your part to repair your error by a speedy revocation; for, if you adhere to that decree, you usurp a power which you have not received from the constitution, and thereby make your own opinion prevail over that of the nation; in which case

you can no longer be regarded as its representatives.

“ If there is just cause of complaint against any of the officers or soldiers which the constitution has attached to my person, you are authorized to issue a decree of accusation against them ; but that decree cannot extend farther. Hasten then to return within the limits of your legal power, which I am so far from intending to circumscribe, that to secure to you the full exercise of it, even at this moment, and to prevent any criminal from escaping, I have ordered all my guards to be assembled, and so to remain until you give orders to apprehend for trial every individual among them, against whom you have any proofs.”

Previous to his majesty's going to the assembly, I should have taken care to have filled the tribunes with a considerable number of the friends of the constitution, to applaud the king's discourse, and to repress, by marks of disapprobation, every

contrary motion. Numerous placards pasted up the preceding day; hand-bills distributed in profusion; intelligent emissaries mixing in the groups, coffee-houses, and public walks, should have prepared the minds of the people for this measure, by representing the decree for disbanding the constitutional guards in its true colours, namely, as a violent infringement of the constitution, and an usurpation of the lawful right of his majesty.

It would have been prudent, at the same time, to have ordered the three thousand Swiss, who were then at Courbevoye, to advance to the heights of Passy, under pretence of being reviewed. This corps, with their brethren, at that time on duty in the Thuilleries, and the constitutional guards, commanded by such a brave and intelligent officer as M. d'Hervilly, would have composed, in case of need, a sufficient force to suppress any insurrection which the Jacobins might have raised.

I very inconsiderately communicated the above plan to the king, of which I afterwards repented, as it could only serve to augment his regret for having sanctioned the decree. This unfortunate monarch was already so much to be pitied, that it was barbarous not to spare him whatever tended uselessly to aggravate his uneasiness. The answer which he wrote, as usual, on the margin of my letter, made me sensible of my indiscretion : it was as follows :

“ You know, I cannot undo what is done ; my soul is full of sorrow. What can I do, surrounded as I am, and with no person near me in whom I can trust ? ”

This sad truth was confirmed by the fatal consequences of the disbanding the guards, which renewed with bitterness the king's regret for having so precipitately gone into the sanction of that decree. But by a fatality which seemed attached to him, and which was always most remarkable on the most critical occasions, those measures which required the greatest deliberation,

and on which he ought to have consulted the persons most worthy of his confidence, were sometimes those which he adopted most hastily ; whereas, on measures whose success depended on celerity, he often deliberated until his adopting them became useless, and even hurtful.

CHAP. XXVI.

The decrees against the nonjuring priests, and for forming a camp in the neighbourhood of Paris.—Division in the cabinet on that occasion.—Dumourier prevails on the king to dismiss three of his ministers.—Miaczenski.—The king prevents a pamphlet from being published against Dumourier.—Fabrication of assignats in the prison.—Important discoveries respecting the troubles in St. Domingo.—The Mulatto Raimond.—Resignation of Dumourier.—A singular letter from him to M. de Larosiere.

THE assembly, whose usurpations increased in proportion as the king's powers of resistance were weakened, passed two most atrocious decrees in the beginning of June 1792. The first was for the banishment of the priests who had refused to take

take the oath ; and the second was for the formation of a camp of twenty thousand men in the environs of Paris, to consist of volunteers from every department of the kingdom. It was very well known, that those volunteers would every where be chosen by the Jacobins, whose power was universally felt, and had impressed such general terror as gave them complete sway in every election ; so that this army must of course have been made up of their creatures, the most seditious and desperate villains in the kingdom. The motive given for this decree, was the safety of the capital. Upon that pretence, Servan the minister, in connivance with the Girond party, without an order from the king, or without communicating his intentions to his colleagues, proposed the measure in a letter to the president of the assembly. His real view was to secure a sufficient force against the royalists who remained in Paris, and that portion of the national guards who were known to be attached to the king
and

and to the constitution, which the Jacobins, as was now evident, intended to overturn.

The king shewed the utmost repugnance to sanction either of these decrees, in spite of the threatening intimations he daily received from his ministers Rolland, Claviere, and Servan.

At that time a quarrel subsisted betwixt these ministers and their colleagues, who, Jacobins as they were, seemed touched with the king's misfortunes, and always behaved to him with respect. They were shocked with the conduct of Rolland, Claviere, and Servan, and determined to take this opportunity to get them dismissed. Dumourier, with the approbation of his colleagues Duranthon and la Cotte, undertook to propose three new ministers to the king. His majesty accepted the proposal with the joy of a person who feels himself suddenly relieved from a heavy load under which he was ready to sink. Soon after the measure was determined on, I was informed

formed of it by a letter from the king, in answer to one I had written the day before, in which I begged to receive his orders respecting a virulent pamphlet against Dumourier, which the author would not publish without his majesty's consent. In the margin of my letter, the king wrote the following words:

“ Prevent any thing from being published against Dumourier, who conducts himself well at this moment; and has helped to free me from three ministers, who endeavoured to force me to sanction the two decrees.”

I had had a very extraordinary conversation, two days before, with a Polish nobleman, marechal de camp in the French service, an intimate friend of Dumourier, and at that time employed in the northern army; his name was Miaczenski. That man, with whom I was till then wholly unacquainted, sent a certain person to request a meeting with me betwixt eleven and twelve o'clock at night, as he wished
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to talk upon subjects of the utmost importance.

It was near midnight when he entered my house: he began by apologizing for having kept me waiting; but said, that being positively informed that my house was watched, he had walked three quarters of an hour in the street, and did not stop at my door until he was certain of not being observed. He then asked, with an air of inquietude, if my closet did not communicate with any other apartment from which our conversation might be heard; and, after I had made him easy on that point, he laid open the important secret. I heard every thing he had to say without interruption, because I remarked a certain expression of low cunning in his countenance, which prejudiced me against him, and put me on my guard. I suspected this man to be a spy of Dumourier's, or an agent of the committee *des recherches*. He began by talking to me of his birth and fortune; of the motives which attached

tached him to the French service, and of a very serious contest he had had with M. de Vergennes, of which he had published a long and circumstantial account. He laid that publication on my table, after having read some passages of it to me, in order to convince me that he was neither an adventurer, nor a person to be at all suspected.

“ I have the honour of being related to the queen,” added he, “ to which I owe my advancement in the service. Assuredly their majesties have not a more faithful or zealous servant than myself: it was only with a view of being useful to them that I remained in France, that I have sought to be employed in the army, deceived that knave Dumourier, have passed on him for his friend, and obtained his whole confidence; for there was no other means of watching him narrowly. He is more dangerous than can be imagined by persons unacquainted with his ambition and want of principle. Every morning I spend an hour or two *tete-à-tete* with him: he is extremely talkative;

talkative; he conceals nothing from me; and, if you have any curiosity, I can give you a regular account of his plans, his projects, and all his secrets."

"I know not any purpose that would answer, sir," said I; "and, as it is what I have no concern in, I have not the least curiosity to know: but are not you going soon to join the army?"

"Yes, sir; and that is the subject on which I wished to talk with you; because it is an occasion in which I can render the king an important service. I am to command the van-guard; and, as I know the country better than any of the general officers, they place great confidence in me. I am certain they will not hesitate to make the army take whatever position I shall point out. There is one position which seems very safe and advantageous; in which, nevertheless, by informing the general of the enemy, I may be attacked in such a manner, that the van-guard must be cut in pieces; the consequences of which, you will readily believe, will be, that the whole
army

army must, of necessity, be either killed on the spot, or made prisoners."

"You will arrange matters, I hope," said I, "in such a manner, that you yourself will be in the latter predicament."

"Unquestionably, sir!" answered he.

"Have you no kind of doubt of the complete success of this complicated operation?"

"Not the least," answered he; "and you can have no doubt of the confusion which so unexpected a defeat must make at Paris. It would at once produce the ruin, perhaps the massacre, of all the Jacobins, and of the national assembly, and create such a detestation of the new constitution as will soon bring back to the king his ancient authority. There is but one small difficulty," continued he; "you know that all discipline and subordination is destroyed in the army: there is no means of securing the obedience of the foldiers, but by gaining their affections by regaling them with brandy and wine.

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This method I did not neglect as long as I had the means ; but now my money is exhausted, and I cannot continue it, so as to retain the confidence of the soldiery, to that degree that is requisite for so decisive a measure, without the sum of about 200,000 livres, which I am persuaded the king will readily advance, provided you will lay my plan before him, and support it by your credit."

"I should be very sorry, sir," said I, "to propose such a scheme to his majesty, as I know it would be the means of losing his confidence for ever. How is it possible, that, knowing the king's character, you could imagine that such a project could be agreeable to him? and I am no less astonished at your choosing me, who have not the honour of being acquainted with you, for your confident on such an occasion."

"I addressed myself to you, sir, as being, of all the former ministers, the most sincerely attached to the king, and the most capable

capable of appreciating the service I wish to render him; the importance of which, perhaps, upon mature consideration, you will come to be more sensible of."

"It requires no consideration at all," answered I. "Reflection could only serve to confirm me in my opinion. I am inclined to believe in the sincerity of your professions of attachment to the king; you may therefore rely on my prudence. I shall endeavour to forget the project which you have revealed to me; I advise you to do the same, and, above all, never to mention it to another person on earth."

The next day I acquainted his majesty with this conversation. He approved of the manner in which I had received Miaczewski's proposal; and added, that he knew him to be a worthless fellow, and was convinced that his sole object was to obtain money.

I should never have done, were I to relate all the singular visits which my known attachment to the king at this time procured me. I was aware, that under colour

of zeal for his majesty, many proposals were made to me for the purpose of discovering if I still interfered in his affairs, what my intentions were, and if I had the disposal of any part of the civil list. Fortunately I had acquired the habit of regarding every proposal as a snare, and I adopted only such as I thought advantageous for his majesty; and even these with such precautions, that whatever might happen, I risked nothing. Of this I shall only give one instance. The chevalier de Langle, a gentleman of Brittany, whose family I had known while in that province, one day presented himself before me in a state of the utmost wretchedness. He had just got out of the prison *de la Force*, where he had been six months confined, through the mistake, as he said, of the *police correctionnelle*. However he did not by any means make that clearly out, in the account he gave me of the affair. He had to speak to me, he said, on a subject of the utmost importance, but first begged that I would order him something to eat, as he was ready to die of hunger.

hunger. He afterwards talked to me of his literary talents, and, as a specimen, he offered me a copy of his travels through Spain. He next read to me the two first pages of a journal which he intended publishing, intitled, *Postillon de la Guerre*. It was tolerably well written, and in favour of constitutional royalty. I did not hesitate to advance him three hundred livres which he required for the expence of the first impresson.

He informed me, that while he was in prison he had seen several thousand false assignats fabricated by the prisoners, who sold them, at a very low price, to persons who came to see them; that the commissaries of the municipality, who visited the prisons once a week, always seized on all the assignats they could discover, but that they never made the least search after the instruments used in making them.

Convinced, as I was, that forged assignats were the principal resource of the Jacobins for the immense expence which their schemes required, I said to the chevalier,

that it would be an act of patriotism, greatly for his interest, to publish the account he had just given me, in the form of a petition, addressed to the national assembly; and that he might claim the reward promised to every one who denounced false assignats. The instances mentioned, of considerable gratifications granted on such occasions, at once determined him to follow my advice; and he gave in his petition next day: but the committee to which it was referred being, without doubt, apprehensive of its producing the effect I hoped for, would not report it, and prevented the chevalier from obtaining permission to speak during a fortnight that he daily presented himself at the bar of the assembly. I advised him to publish the petition, addressed to the members of the assembly, under the title of a plot against the nation. He was the more inclined to follow this advice, as I enforced it by an assignat of two hundred livres, given in advance for the expence of the impression. He promised to repay me boths sums out of the reward he had a

right to expect from the assembly. Whether he ever received any I know not. What I do know is, that he never repaid me. There assuredly never existed a more indefatigable walker than this chevalier. Every morning, as soon as his paper was drawn up, he went over the town, the suburbs, through all the public walks, into the clubs and coffee-houses, and was the first to give me an account of every interesting occurrence; and on comparing his reports with those I received from my other agents, I usually found them exact.

One day, in conversing with me on the troubles of St. Domingo, he entered into details, of which I should never have conceived him to have any knowledge. On my expressing some surprise, he told me, that nobody had a better opportunity than himself of being informed of every circumstance relating to that colony, as he was intimately acquainted with the mistress of the mulatto Raimond, who was agent of the mulattos of St. Domingo; that this man

had the greatest confidence in her, and allowed her to read all his papers; that of course she knew every particular of his correspondence with Domingo, all which she divulged to de Langle, being dissatisfied with Raimond for not paying her so liberally as she expected.

This intelligence was the more interesting, as the troubles of the colonies had been excited, and were at this time kept up by the manœuvres of a party known by the name of *les amis des noirs*, at the head of which were Brissot and Condorcet. It was also known that a considerable contribution had been raised from the richest mulattos of St. Domingo, and sent to Paris: but the precise manner in which this money had been employed had never been ascertained; and I hoped that this correspondence would throw light upon the subject, and furnish powerful arms against the king's most dangerous enemies. That consideration alone was sufficient to make me ardently desire, at any rate, to
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get possession of papers of such importance; but before I expressed this desire to the chevalier de Langle, I wished to be more clearly informed of the particulars of the correspondence; and I commissioned him to use all his address to engage Raimond's mistress to examine anew these papers the first convenient opportunity, and to read those of the oldest date with such attention as would enable her to repeat the heads of what they contained.

This commission was fulfilled in a few days, with all the intelligence I could desire. The chevalier read me a note of the woman's dictating, by which it appeared, that the first parcel contained minutes of instructions and plans sent to St. Domingo in the year 1790 and 1791, for the purpose of exciting, conducting, and supporting the insurrection of the negroes; and also copies of printed pamphlets and hand-bills, which were to be distributed in the colony.

The second parcel contained the draught of a plan, and the register of a contribution to be raised upon the mulattos of St. Domingo, the sum total of which amounted to above seven millions of livres. To these papers was joined a memorial respecting the manner in which the money was to be employed. Great part of it was to be sent to Paris, to reward the past, and purchase new services of several members of the assembly and of the Jacobin clubs, to pay lawyers, writers of pamphlets, and journalists, to defray the expence of printing placards, &c.

The third contained a great number of original letters, addressed to Raimond by his correspondents of St. Domingo, and notes of his answers. One of the letters announced, that nearly a million had been sent to Paris, "*en attendant mieux.*" And it appeared, by one of his letters, that Brissot had been entrusted with the sum of 300,000 livres; Condorcet with 150,000; the Abbé Gregoire 80,000; and Petion 60,000:

60,000 : but Robespierre would accept of no money, either for the purpose of distribution or gratification, although he served the cause with equal zeal.

The lady had not had time to read more : but this was sufficient to augment my eagerness to have the correspondence in my own hands ; and I asked the chevalier if it would be possible to procure me these papers for eight days, upon pretence that a person, who was writing a history of the troubles in St. Domingo, desired to see them. He said he was sure the lady would be prevailed upon, by my sending her the sum of a hundred louis, which she had the most pressing occasion for at that time. I was afraid that the giving such a sum would raise suspicions in her mind detrimental to the success of the negociation ; I therefore desired the chevalier to let her know I would not *give* her so much, but since she was in temporary difficulties, I would venture to *lend* her a thousand crowns, which should be put into her hand at the same time that she delivered up the papers to the person

person I should send to examine and receive them. She eagerly accepted my offer, and sent me word, that she hoped the affair would be concluded by the end of the week. I had also promised a thousand livres to the chevalier de Langle if he succeeded in his negociation ; and he had already received part of it. Unluckily, before the lady could find an opportunity of taking the papers out of Raimond's closet, he set off for Auteuil, in the intention of passing the summer there. She flattered herself that she should persuade him to return, and have it in her power to fulfil our agreement ; and the chevalier, to whom I had by this time paid up the whole sum, kept me in the same hopes : but the catastrophe of the 10th of August prevented their being ever realized.

It is impossible to describe the chagrin I felt at the unlucky issue of a scheme, the success of which might have been of so much consequence to the king, in the unhappy situation he then was.

Two days after the dismissal of Rolland, Claviere, and Servan, Dumourier perceived that their friends attributed the disgrace of these three ministers entirely to him ; that this idea alienated the majority of the assembly from him and from the Jacobins ; he therefore determined to sacrifice every appearance of consistency, and all consideration for the feelings of his sovereign, in order to regain his popularity. He must have been very sensible that the king never would sanction the decrees respecting the camp and the priests, particularly that which regarded the latter ; and although, so far from combating his majesty's repugnance, he had supported him in it, and instigated the dismissal of the three ministers who were for passing those decrees, he now had the baseness and effrontery to propose to his majesty either to sanction these very decrees, or receive his resignation. He added, that from the bad effect which the dismissal of the ministers had produced, his services would be more prejudicial than useful, if these decrees were not passed. It
was

was in vain that his majesty remonstrated against this unbecoming conduct. Dumourier persisted, and his resignation was accepted.

I received a letter from the king on this occasion, in which he says,

“Only conceive the strange inconsistency of this man; after having persuaded me to dismiss those three ministers, because they insisted on my sanctioning the decrees, he now abandons me for persisting in the measure which *he* himself urged.”

This observation was certainly very just: but it is still more inconceivable, that in spite of the notoriety of the above facts, Dumourier has had the assurance to advance, in his Memoirs, that at the time of the dismissal of the three ministers, the king had solemnly promised to him to sanction the decree; and that he had given in his resignation for no other reason but because the king changed his mind two days after, and refused to fulfil his promise.

It may seem extraordinary that a man, who is so unfaithful in relating what is past,

past, should have come near to truth in indicating what was to come. Of this there is an instance in a letter which he wrote to M. de Larosiere, dated 16th December 1789. I copied the following extract from the original, and now give it as a curiosity to the public :

“ Cherbourg, Dec. 1789.

“ * * * * *

“ Your son-in-law told me of your adventure at Rennes. As I have always found you more of an aristocrate than myself, but particularly in our last conversation with M. de Montmorin, I was apprehensive for your safety in the present circumstances, but am glad to hear that you have so happily extricated yourself.

“ Remain peaceably at your estate till spring ; then I fear you will have occasion to exert your military talents against foreigners. Our liberty will be attacked by a coalition of kings, and the courtiers will form a light squadron, prancing backwards and forwards between the parties. It is then
that

that men like us, distinguished for conduct and talents, will become chiefs of the nation, to defend its freedom. The king himself is with us, and will not abandon the good cause. Every step we take in support of liberty will be considered as legal.

“ My old friend, never lose sight of this, lest you be led astray. The revolution is already accomplished, by means, perhaps, reprehensible, if we still adhere to the prejudices which existed two years ago : but now we are free, although, perhaps, at the expence of our repose. Your children will be happier than you. Impress that idea on their minds. Render them proud of their liberty. Render them capable of supporting your reputation under more propitious auspices ; for we were slaves, and enjoy, by anticipation, their approaching happiness and glory.

“ These, my friend, are the new sentiments to which we must adhere. Should I find them to deaden in the breasts of my countrymen, I would be the first to revive

them. This patriotic enthusiasm is far from extinguishing in me the mild sensations which form my felicity. Friendship is the sentiment dearest to my heart ; and under that revered title I salute you very cordially. My respects to madame Larofiere. Assure your children that you have in me a sincere friend.

DUMOURIER."

CHAP. XXVII.

The real motive for the two decrees.—A secretary of Condorcet's pays a visit to M. de Lessart in prison, and informs him of the projects agreed upon in the secret committee of the Jacobins.—M. de Lessart writes an account of this to me.—I send his letter to the king.—Petitions against one of the decrees.—The attempt of the 20th of June.—Proclamation.—The good effect it produces.—Decree of the department suspending Petion.—The king forced to pronounce on that decree, and to confirm it.—The assembly repeals it.—The king's fatal forebodings.—An interesting conversation with him upon the event of the 20th of June.—Plan which I proposed to his majesty.—His motives for not adopting it.

I ALWAYS thought that the decrees concerning the priests, and for the camp of 20,000 men, were issued in the hopes that
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the king would refuse his sanction, and that this refusal would naturally lead to an insurrection. The Gironde party flattered themselves by this means to hasten the execution of their plan against the king and the monarchy. A remarkable letter I received from M. de Lessart, some days before those decrees were issued, and which I had communicated to the king, confirmed me in that opinion. It was in substance as follows :

“ That a person, who had been under great obligations to M. de Lessart before the revolution, and who was then secretary to Condorcet, passing through Orleans, had gone to the prison to visit his benefactor, and had a conversation of two hours with him ; that in the course of this conversation, M. de Lessart having questioned him concerning the projects of the Jacobins, the man, either from motives of gratitude, or from the idea that he had nothing to fear from the indiscretion of a prisoner, whose process would probably draw to a great length, immediately gave an account of all

he knew, on promise of secrecy. This secretary told him, that the present object of the secret committee of Jacobins was to form a plan of insurrection for attacking the Thuilleries, of the same kind with that of the 5th of October 1789, at Versailles, with a view to push the king to abdicate the crown, or to take flight; that in either of these cases they would name a council of regency, composed of the principal chiefs of the Jacobins; that if the king escaped this first insurrection, without either abdicating or leaving the kingdom, it was their determination to find some pretext for exciting a fresh insurrection, with a view to terrify the national assembly, and force them to pronounce his *dechéance*, and afterwards to pronounce the prince royal king, with a council of regency; all which was to pave the way to what was the great and ultimate object of the Gironde party, namely, to establish a republic, which they thought the nation was not prepared for at the present moment, but were in hopes that it would gradually be brought to relish that form of govern-

government, and at last be brought to adopt it without a struggle."

I communicated this letter to the king, and burnt it as soon as he returned it to me, according to M. de Lessart's express desire. His majesty wrote to me, in answer, "that such might be the scheme of the Jacobins: but all that he could do was to endeavour to evade their machinations, by remaining faithful to the constitution *."

The opinion manifested in the capital, upon the dismissal of the three ministers, was calculated to put an end to all inquietude respecting the refusal of the sanction. A silence was maintained upon the decree against the priests, but two petitions were addressed to the king and the assembly, for the revocation of that for the camp of 20,000 men. This decree had greatly alarmed the citizens, and was considered by

* At this time the leaders of the Gironde party had great influence with the Jacobins: but they abandoned that society, on account of its violence, soon after. At the 10th of August 1792, they intended the execution of this plan only, but they were forced into a republic, long before the time when they judged it would be expedient, by Danton, Robespierre, Collot d'Herbois, &c.

the national guards as an insult on their fidelity and courage. One of these petitions was signed by twenty thousand, the other by eight thousand citizens, great part of whom were connected with the national guards. The Jacobins were sensible how much this coalition might injure them, if they allowed it to become more formidable; they therefore hastened to prevent its consequences, by immediately bringing forward the plan alluded to in M. de Leflant's letter, which was put in execution by the famous insurrection of the 20th of June, in which the king owed his life to his presence of mind and cool courage, the queen to the dignity of her manners and appearance, and madame Elizabeth to the general respect due to her character, and the admiration inspired by the heroic manner in which she exposed her own life to save the queen's*.

* When the mob filled the apartments of the Thuilleries, on the 20th of June, some wretches insulted madame Elizabeth, taking her for the queen. "Do not undeceive them," said the generous princess to her attendants; "it will prevent them from attacking the queen."

The crimes of that horrible day are so well known, that it is unnecessary to repeat them here. Hardly had the populace gone out of the palace, when those, even of the lowest class, who had taken no part in the insurrection, broke out into invectives against the authors of it, and admired the conduct, courage, and moderation of the king and the royal family. A proclamation, extremely well written, was next day published. It was drawn up by M. Terrier de Monciel, who had just been named minister of the home department, and it produced a very good effect, not only in Paris, but in all the different departments, who sent addresses to the king; and the assembly demanding that the authors of the insurrection might be punished with the utmost severity. It was in the Jacobin club they were to be found. The information received by the department of Paris left no doubt on that point. It evidently appeared that Petion the mayor, and Manuel *procureur de la commune*, both Jacobins, might easily have prevented or dis-

sipated this insurrection : but it was pretty universally believed that they had favoured it ; and the whole of their conduct was judged so reprehensible, that in spite of their great popularity the department suspended them from their functions. This decision produced a great effect in the capital. The majority of citizens approved of it ; the royalists thought it too moderate ; the Jacobins were enraged, and breathed vengeance. According to the constitution, the decrees of the department could not be executed until they were confirmed by the king, and afterwards they were to be submitted to the legislative body, who had authority to repeal or confirm them, whatever had been the king's decision. This decree, suspending the mayor, was of course presented to the king, who refused to take any cognizance of it, giving for his motive, that as it regarded himself personally, he, as well as his council, might be suspected of partiality, and therefore he chose to refer the decree to the president of the assembly ; at the same time

time informing him of his reasons for not pronouncing upon it, and declaring that he relied with confidence on the wisdom of the assembly. The Jacobins, too artful to let slip such an opportunity of mortifying the king, and being now more indifferent with regard to the general indignation which they had in a great measure appeased, prevailed on the assembly to declare that this conduct of his majesty was unconstitutional, because the constitution had not pointed out any one case in which the decrees of the departments should not be decided upon by the king, before they should be submitted to the national assembly. The decree, therefore, was carried to the king, who being thus forced to decide, immediately confirmed it: but two days after, this judgment was annulled by the assembly, who repealed the decree of the department, reinstated Petion in his office, and thus re-established with triumph the power of the Jacobins, to the great scandal of many who, though indignant, remained passive for want of leaders.

The situation of the king and queen became daily more difficult and perilous : the execution of the plan mentioned in M. de Lessart's letter, was now pursued with equal success and activity.

The king could no longer hope to secure his safety by means of force ; for, besides that he was by character averse to such measures, he was deprived of every resource of that nature by the disbanding of his guards, the union of the Swiss to the troops of the line, and by the emigration of the nobility. All that now remained for him, was to fly from the capital ; but the consequences, ever to be deplored, of the journey to Varennes, and the many mortifications which attended that event, connected every enterprise of that kind with reflections so bitter, that nothing could have induced him to listen to any plan of escape, but the most positive assurances that the lives of his family were in danger, and that flight alone could secure them from the poniards of assassins. I say, the lives of his family, not his own ; for ever since the

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day

day on which he was stopped at Varennes, the unhappy prince had been deeply impressed with the idea, that he would be assassinated; that all attempts to elude his destiny, would have no effect, but that of increasing the danger of his family and friends. Under this melancholy impression, he waited for death with a resignation so calmly heroic, that it might have been mistaken for indifference about life.

He frequently read the history of Charles the First of England: his chief attention was to endeavour in every act to avoid whatever might serve as a pretext for bringing him to a legal trial.

The sacrifice of his life seemed to cost him nothing. The honour of the nation was the sole object of his thought. The idea of being publicly murdered, in the name of the people, shocked him greatly. He wished rather to die by the hands of an assassin, that his murder might be considered as the crime of a few individuals, and not a national act.

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In a conversation with this unhappy prince on the 21st of June, I discovered that his mind was deeply impressed with the most dreadful forebodings.

To my congratulations on his having escaped the dangers of the preceding day, his majesty answered :

“ My uneasiness was entirely on account of the queen and my sister ; for myself I had no solicitude.”

“ But it seems to me,” said I, “ that it was chiefly against your majesty that the insurrection was directed.”

“ I know it very well,” answered he ; “ I saw that their intention was to assassinate me ; and I can’t conceive why they did not do it : but I shall not escape them another day ; so that I am not the more fortunate. It is much the same whether I am murdered two months sooner or later.

“ My God !” cried I, “ does your majesty then really believe that you will be assassinated ?”

“ I am convinced of it,” replied he, “ I have long expected it ; and I have made
up

up my mind to it. Do you think I fear death?"

"No, certainly; but I wish to see your majesty less convinced that you are near it, and more disposed to adopt the vigorous measures from which alone you can expect safety."

"There may be a possibility of my escaping; but still there are many chances against it; and I am not lucky. I might risk another attempt if I were alone. Oh! if my wife and children were not with me, it would soon appear that I am not so weak as is imagined; but what would become of them if the measures you allude to should fail?"

"But if your majesty should be assassinated, do you think that your family would be in greater safety?"

"Yes, I think they would. I hope so, at least; and, if it should happen otherwise, I could not be reproached with being the cause. But what do you think I can do?"

"I think," answered I, "that your majesty could now get out of Paris with less difficulty

difficulty than ever ; because the events of yesterday have made it too clear, that your life is not in safety in the capital."

"Oh ! I will not attempt to escape a second time ; I suffered too much on the last occasion."

"I am of your majesty's opinion," replied I, "that you ought not to think of escaping secretly at present ; but the general indignation which is raised by the events of yesterday, offer, in my mind, a very favourable opportunity for your leaving Paris openly, and without opposition ; not only with the consent of the great majority of the citizens, but even with their approbation. I beg that your majesty will give me leave to take this measure into consideration, and afterwards to submit my ideas to you respecting the mode of executing it."

"You may do so ; but you will find it more difficult than you imagine."

One of the incidents of the 20th of June, which had given most vexation to the king's friends, was, that the red cap had remained

mained on his head for nearly three hours. I took the liberty to beg of his majesty to explain a circumstance seemingly so inconsistent with the cool intrepidity remarkable in his conduct on that day. His answer was as follows :

“ When the cry of *vive la nation* was redoubled with vehemence, and evidently addressed to me, I loudly said, that the nation had not a better friend than myself. Upon which a fellow, of a sanguinary aspect, with a pike in his hand, and evidently drunk, forced his way close to me through the crowd, and said rudely enough, ‘ If you are telling the truth, prove it by putting on the *bonnet rouge*.’

“ I consent,” answered I, “ and directly the fellow, with one of his companions, advanced, and placed the cap on the top of my hair ; for it was too small for my head. I imagined, I don’t know why, that their intention was merely to place the cap, and to withdraw it directly ; I thought no more about it ; indeed, I was too much engrossed by the scenes around me, to think
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of the cap; and, after I had returned to my own apartment, when one of my attendants mentioned it, I was astonished to find it on my head; indeed, I am convinced I might have taken it off in the hall without any danger; but, I am also convinced, that if I had opposed its being placed on my head, the man in liquor would have plunged his pike into my bowels."

M. le Marechal de Mouchy, and M. d'Hervilly, who were present, and saw all that passed, have both related the same circumstances in the same manner; from which it appears, that if the king could not prevent the insult of the red cap being placed on his head, he cannot be accused of allowing it to remain there so long as it did through fear of taking it off.

On the 23d of June I sent his majesty a plan, of which I have preserved the subsequent note:

"Article First. To re-establish the constitutional guard, and inform the assembly of it by a letter to the president, in which the king should,

should, at the same time, give notice, that it was his intention to exclude all the officers and soldiers against whom any serious accusation has been proved, desiring the assembly to send him a list of their names.

“Second. To give orders, that the three thousand Swiss, which were at Courbevoye, shall set off in detachments, consisting of five hundred men, and be placed in the principal villages upon the road to Fontainebleau, to attend the king's passage.

“Third. As soon as the guard is re-established, which can be done in less than three days, as the officers and soldiers are all at Paris, a letter should be written to the national assembly, importing, that the king's health, and that of the royal family, requiring the country air, his majesty intended to pass a few days at Fontainebleau; and that he would take necessary measures for preventing this journey from obstructing the public business. That a letter to the same effect should be written to the municipality, and both sent at the moment when their majesties were stepping
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into the carriage; so that their intention might not be known till they had passed the barriers. No person should be in their confidence before the instant in which they set off: that they should go in the same carriage in which they usually take their airing; and every preparation avoided which could possibly raise suspicion of a project to escape.

“Fourth. There should be only one carriage, and the same number of guards which usually accompany the royal family: that orders should be given for three hundred guards on horseback, to meet the king, two miles from Paris, on the road to Fontainebleau, in order to overawe all who should shew any disposition to hinder his majesty from continuing his journey: the rest of the constitutional guards should be distributed at the various posts where the detachments of the Swiss guards had, according to the second article, been previously placed.

“Fifth. That an hour after the departure of the royal family, M. de la Porte,
or

or any other person in the king's confidence, should inform those domestics which the king or queen choose to attend them; to set out separately, and at convenient intervals, lest too great a number of carriages appearing at the same time should excite the attention and inquietude of the people."

The king wrote, in answer, on the margin of my plan :

" A departure so precipitate without preparations, and before informing the assembly, has too much the appearance of a flight. If I should not set off till the assembly have received my letter, and deliberated upon it, they would pass to the order of the day ; and, in that interval, an insurrection would be raised to stop me. Besides it will be almost impossible to execute your plan without taking several persons into our confidence. The re-establishment of my guard would also, in all appearance, meet with great opposition."

Upon these observations, I submitted to the king another plan, or rather the form of another letter to the assembly ; by which

he should place them between the alternatives of approving of his departure by a decree, or of rendering themselves responsible for every attempt which might be made against his person.

This new letter was conceived in the following terms :

“ M. President,

“ The health of my family, as well as my own, require that we leave Paris. I propose going to Fontainebleau, and shall take the necessary measures to prevent the journey from retarding public business. Nevertheless, if the assembly is of opinion that I ought not, in the present emergency, to go far from Paris, I can defer my departure for a few days.

“ I beg you will transmit to me the opinion of the assembly on this subject. I desire also, that you may inform them, that I am occupied with the new formation of my constitutional guard.

“ I desire that the assembly may send me the names of the officers or soldiers against whom there exists any serious accusation,
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supported by proof, that they may be left out of the new establishment."

At the same time that I sent this new plan, I remarked to his majesty, that the assembly could not avoid deliberating upon his letter; and, that if they approved of his majesty's departure, he had no obstacle to apprehend; but if, on the contrary, they should declare that his presence was necessary at Paris, they could not dispense with using every possible precaution for the security of his person, that they might not give just ground for being accused of having detained the king for no other reason than in order to have him assassinated.

The king rejected this second plan, by the following marginal note:

"It is undoubtedly necessary to provide for our safety; but even that must be done with dignity. I find none in the new plan you propose*."

* "Il faut sans doute s'occuper de la sûreté; mais sans oublier la dignité; et je n'en trouve pas dans le nouveau parti que vous proposez."

This answer was in a style that I never should have expected from the king : I suspected its being dictated by the queen ; and was confirmed in my opinion next day on receiving a letter from her, conceived in nearly the same terms.

That unfortunate princess, although overwhelmed with misfortunes, allowed herself to be deluded by the hopes, that the king's affairs would, of themselves, take a favourable turn : she entertained that idea to the last. To this security, or fatal want of foresight, we must attribute her repugnance to the only measures that now remained to save the king and herself from the impending danger.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Representations made to the king upon the necessity of adopting a plan, and adhering to it.—The king approves of the proposal of concerting with M. Montmorin, and M. Malouet, respecting his situation.—His majesty's sentiments of M. Malouet.—Plan for gaining the tribunes of the assembly.—Rejected by the king, but executed without his knowledge.—He discovers this, and orders its suspension.—General plan of conduct proposed to his majesty.—M. de la Fayette.

I WAS far from thinking that the faint remains of royal dignity could be wounded by the plan I proposed to the king, and I attributed his answer less to any idea of his own of that nature, than to the usual indecision of his character, and to the influence of the queen. To this may be added,

the illusion in which he was kept by those around him, respecting the attachment of the Parisians to his person, and the loyalty of the national guards, both which were represented as much greater than they were in reality. Indeed I had long been averse from exposing the dangers that surrounded him to their full extent, from a fear of discouraging him too much. I now thought it incumbent on me, however, to represent, in a letter, that his situation had become so critical, that I durst no longer take on me to advise him, without the assistance of other counsellors, in whose prudence and attachment he placed confidence; that it appeared absolutely necessary that some plan of conduct should be formed, adapted to the present circumstances, and strictly adhered to, which would prevent his being left to the mercy of events, without the power of resistance, or any preparation to meet them; that if his majesty had already adopted any plan, and would condescend to communicate it to me, I would lay it before M. Montmorin and M. Malouet; that
after

after deliberating on it with them, I would transmit the result to his majesty, who would reject or adopt it as his wisdom directed. I informed the king, at the same time, that Buob, the justice of the peace, was clearly of opinion that nothing was more urgent than to secure a majority in the galleries of the assembly, by placing a sufficient number of hired people to overbalance the emissaries sent there by the Jacobins.

The king wrote the following notes in the margin of my letter :

1st. "I feel the necessity of a plan, although it appears to me impossible to avoid deviating sometimes from any plan whatever. Send me one."

2dly. "The scheme of gaining the tribunes would be a good one, if it were practicable : but we must renounce it. During the first assembly, the same attempt cost the civil list more than three millions, and the tribunes were constantly against me notwithstanding."

3dly. "I approve of your taking the advice of Messrs. Montmorin and Malouet,

respecting your plan, and every other important matter you may judge proper to propose to me."

The king esteemed M. Malouet, and relied on his attachment. He had filled with honour the places of intendant of the colonies and of the marine, and was equally distinguished in the assembly for his understanding, courage, and probity. His opinions, though generally very just, were seldom adopted, because he belonged to no party; and of course all parties were usually against him. The *Côté Droit* could not forgive him, because he wished to have a representative government; while he enraged the *Côté Gauche* by his unalterable zeal in supporting royalty.

I do not say that at the first period of the revolution, when people's minds were heated by new systems, that M. Malouet constantly opposed the ideas so universally adopted in favour of liberty, a new constitution, and of a considerable degree of reformation; he had perhaps too high a notion of the advantages of giving France a new constitution, and

and a greater degree of freedom. Perhaps he imputed to the government certain acts of despotism, which entirely proceeded from the imperious character of certain ministers. He may, in common with the best men, have fallen into mistakes: but it must be acknowledged that his intentions were always pure; and that he was the first to foresee and announce the horrible consequences to be dreaded from the revolution; that none defended, with more intrepidity, the rights and prerogatives of the king, to whom he gave proofs of zeal and attachment to the very last. In short, he is the only one who, after the constitution was accepted, had the courage to ascend the tribune, and make a formal protest against it.

M. de la Porte, to whom I communicated the scheme of gaining the tribunes, assured me that the king's statement was pretty exact; for that in the space of eight or nine months more than 2,500,000 livres had been expended for that object, but without attaining it. In fact, the persons entrusted

with that business were suspected of having turned the greatest part of the money to their own profit ; and as it was impossible to guard against imposition in an affair of that nature, the king had determined to renounce such schemes altogether.

Although, of the two chief undertakers for gaining the tribunes, one made a purchase, at that time, of land to the value of 1,200,000, and the other, of land to the value of 700,000 livres, I will not affirm that those purchases were made with the money of the civil list : but I do assert, that it is not in their power to clear themselves of that suspicion, but by acknowledging and proving that they were guilty of a degree of negligence almost as culpable.

During my own administration, I knew, by experience, that the applause of the tribunes could be secured at no great expence. It was on the day on which I was to give my final answer, before the assembly, to the denunciations which had been made against me. I had been informed, two days before, that the secret

committee of Jacobins had agreed to reinforce the number of their emissaries in the tribunes, on purpose to hiss me. This information was communicated by one of the *vainqueurs de la Bastille*, as they were called. I had rendered a great service to this man before the revolution, and he was entirely devoted to me ever after. He had great influence in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, and engaged to find, amongst the workmen of that quarter, two hundred robust hardy fellows who might be depended upon, and to bring them to the assembly, on the day appointed, before the doors were opened, that they might secure places in the galleries. They were directed to hiss or applaud according to certain signals from their leaders. This manœuvre had all the success I could desire. The discourse I pronounced was frequently interrupted by the applause of the tribunes, which continued for a long time after I had done speaking. The Jacobins were confounded, and could not comprehend the meaning of it. I was still in the assembly with the other ministers, who had all paid
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me the compliment of accompanying me on that occasion ; when the Abbé Fauchet desired permission to speak upon a matter which he declared was of great importance.

“ A letter has this instant been delivered to me,” said he, “ informing me, that a great portion of the citizens have been *bired* to applaud the minister of marine.”

But the abbé’s established reputation for impudence and falsehood made his accusation appear ridiculous, especially as it was not unusual for the speeches which I made in the assembly to be applauded by the people in the galleries ; for I had been always careful to season them with certain words and phrases which, without regarding their import, the people never failed to applaud, when they were pronounced with sufficient emphasis.

Hardly had the Abbé Fauchet finished his speech, than it was stifled by a general murmur of the assembly, and the hisses of the tribunes, who had received a signal for that purpose.

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This victory over the Jacobins cost me nothing, because my champions, from attachment to their chief, would receive nothing from him but a glass of brandy.

I gave the king an account of this, in answer to his majesty's last notes; and I sent him a plan that Buob had remitted to me, for gaining the tribunes, by which the expence would only have amounted to 800 livres a day. It was as follows:

To fill the two first rows of the galleries with 262 persons, whose pay was to be as follows:

1st. For a chief, who alone was in the secret, 50 livres a day.

2dly. An under-chief, chosen by the first, 25 livres a day.

3dly. Ten adjutants, at 10 livres a day, to be chosen by the chief, but having no acquaintance with each other. Each of these were ordered to hire twenty-five men, and to bring them every day to the assembly.

4thly. Two hundred and fifty men, at 50 sols a day.

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The chief was to be placed in the middle of the front of one gallery, and the under-chief to take his place in the same part of the other ; the chiefs only to be known to the five adjutants who were placed in each gallery. The under-chief was to receive orders by a signal from his superior, which could be understood by him only ; who, by a second signal, conveyed the order to the adjutants, who, on their part, by a signal, communicated it to the twenty-five men each adjutant had under him. This manœuvre was always performed in both galleries at the same instant. The ten adjutants, and all underthem, were to be engaged in the name of Petion, and on pretence of supporting the constitution against aristocrates and republicans. A gentleman, in the king's confidence, was to communicate with an officer of the disbanded guards, devoted to his majesty, furnishing him, at the same time, with money and instructions for the conduct of the tribunes. This officer was to deliver the same to a man in whom he had confidence, who was the engager of the chief,

chief, who, on receiving the money and instructions, was to direct the whole as above mentioned.

By means of those precautions, the entire discovery of the plan was next to impossible; because, although one of the agents had revealed all he knew, yet, by making another agent disappear, the chain of discovery would have been entirely broken.

In order to guard against imposition as much as possible, Buob proposed to send five men every day to each tribune, as observers of what passed, with orders to endeavour to calculate nearly the number of those who applauded or who hissed, and bring him an account of it.

The king sent back the whole of this plan to me, without approving it: but when I informed Buob, who was, of all the men I ever knew, the most headstrong and unmanageable, he said, with passion,

“The king may think of this plan what he pleases, but I am certain that nothing but this, or a scheme of the same nature, can

can save him and his family. I will therefore take it on me to save them at every risk ; and if I should never be paid by the civil list, I will do without it."

Accordingly he made the trial for a week, and the consequence was as follows : The first and second day the chiefs were contented to prevent both hissing and applauding. The signals they gave for preserving silence were always under the pretence of wishing to hear the speakers more distinctly. This alone was an essential point gained. The third day they began to applaud the constitutional orators with moderation, and continued to prevent their opponents from being applauded. On the fourth day they observed the same plan ; only the applause of the constitutional speeches was more animated.. The assembly were at a loss to comprehend the meaning of all this. The members looked frequently with astonishment to the tribunes : but seeing them filled with people of the usual appearance, they imputed the applause to some mistake, and took no farther notice. The fifth day the
same

same applauses were redoubled, and they began to hiss faintly anti-constitutional motions and opinions. The assembly was a little disconcerted: but one of the adjutants, being questioned by a deputy, answered, that he was for the constitution and for Petion. They were confirmed in the notion of the audience being under a mistake. The sixth day, the hisses and applauses being continued in the same style, but with much greater violence, the assembly took offence. A motion was made against the tribunes, which they repelled with clamour, abusive language, and threats. Some of the people in pay carried their audacity so far as to raise their sticks, in a menacing manner, against the deputies nearest them, exclaiming, that the assembly was a band of villains who deserved to be destroyed.

The president, being, perhaps, afraid that the whole of the audience might adopt the same opinion, broke up the assembly.

In going out of the hall, several of the deputies, addressing some of the most active agents, were assured that they had been engaged in the name of Petion. Those deputies immediately carried their complaint to him, convinced that he had been deceived ; that he would disapprove the conduct of his agents, and dismiss them.

Petion, who had not before heard what passed in the assembly, swore, with great truth, that he had no hand in the matter ; and that he had not, for a long time, employed any person in the tribunes ; adding, that it must be some manœuvre of his enemies, and that he would neglect no means of discovering the authors. Accordingly I received accounts that his emissaries had been in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, and had questioned a number of workmen, without making any discovery.

The king took notice of the remarkable change which had taken place in the tribunes, and soon guessed the cause. He wrote to me, that he saw they had been gained, but that the expedient had been
carried

carried too far ; that it should be reserved for a more urgent occasion ; and that he would let me know when he wished such means should be employed ; meanwhile, that I must give Buob positive orders to disband his troops.

I have often thought that it would have been wiser to have adhered to the plan of merely silencing the tribunes, as it was by means of their clamour and applause that the assembly passed the most violent decrees: but Buob was anxious, above every thing, to convince the king, that by paying the tribunes, it would be possible to go any lengths against the Jacobins. If this object could have been attained at this desperate moment, when the force of the government was greatly weakened, and when there remained only one crime more to be committed, in order to overthrow the monarchy, it is probable that had Buob's plan been adopted during the first assembly, before the intemperate heat of the Jacobins had misled, and even enslaved, the public

mind, the government might have been maintained.

After several conferences with Messrs. Montmorin and Malouet, respecting the plan which the king had demanded of us, we proposed to him what follows :

“ 1st. To prepare, without loss of time, the re-establishment of the constitutional guard.

“ 2dly. To defer, as long as possible, the execution of the decree suppressing the Swiss guard, on purpose to unite them with the troops of the line.

“ 3dly. To let no opportunity escape of publishing proclamations, the best calculated for enlightening the people respecting the manœuvres and snares of the Jacobins, and for keeping the Parisians in the favourable disposition produced by the insurrection of the 20th of June ; also to write letters, with the same view, to the assembly, as often as any plausible pretext should occur.

“ 4thly. To endeavour to find the means of withdrawing from Paris in the safest way possible.

“ 5thly.

“ 5thly. Not to divide his confidence ; that is to say, not to consult separately people of different notions and principles, who, having no communication with each other, would only embarrass him, or lead him into contradictory measures, which would end in ruin.”

The king did not return the above plan for two days after receiving it. The subsequent answer was written in the margin when it came to me.

“ I cannot but approve of your plan, and have only to object to the difficulty I foresee in its execution. Mention circumstantially in your next how the first and fourth articles are to be accomplished.”

I had already reflected on those means which we had discussed in our committee ; but it was unnecessary to inform the king of them until we knew whether or not our plan would be agreeable to him.

The part which M. de la Fayette acted at the commencement of the revolution, was too remarkable for permitting his conduct at a later period to be passed over in
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silence. This constitutional general, whose head was not a little turned by the American revolution, and by extravagant sentiments of liberty, had unquestionably been one of the principal instigators of the French revolution; of which he expected to become the Washington. His friends thought him in reality capable of being so; but he has since sufficiently proved, that whatever resemblance there might be in their dress or appearance, there was a prodigious difference in their abilities.

But justice and truth compel me to acknowledge, that from the end of March 1792, M. de la Fayette's eyes seemed to have become open to his past errors: (his present situation, and the misfortunes of his family forbid any harsher expression :) the dreadful progress of the revolution alarmed him; and he seemed sincerely resolved to try every means to save the king.

Although he did not possess all the firmness requisite for such an attempt, perhaps he would have succeeded, had it not been for the extreme reluctance of their majesties

to every vigorous measure, and their unwillingness to owe such an important service to a man whom they had so long considered as their enemy.

One day, about the beginning of June, I met with M. de Lally Tolendal, recently arrived from England, at M. de Montmorin's: he asked me to go with him into the garden, where he spoke to me as follows:

“ Sir, though I am no longer a French but a British subject, I will retain to my latest breath, the warmest attachment to the person, respect for the virtues, and gratitude for the favours of Lewis XVI.

“ If ever the day should arrive in which I shall be instrumental to his safety, I will esteem it the happiest of my life. I am here for that purpose only, and we are not totally devoid of hope. I say *we*, because I am united with M. de Clermont Tonnerre, and other friends, devoted entirely to the king, to royalty, and to liberty. A plan for his complete restoration on these

grounds, has been the result of all our deliberations. We have communicated our plan to M. Malouet. He has advised me to make you acquainted with it, as you possess the king's confidence; and I have called you aside for that purpose."

After this introduction, M. de Lally assured me that the basis of the plan formed by himself and his associates, was to set the king at full liberty; to crush the Jacobins; to render his majesty the mediator between France and Europe, between the French and the French; then to proceed to reform the constitution itself; to bound the popular power by the means of the people themselves; and to ensure to Lewis XVI. the consolation which his heart so much panted after, that of uniting, like Trajan, the liberty of the people with the prerogative of the prince.

"All this is very fine indeed," said I; "but for the execution of the first step, the king's deliverance, what means have you?"

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“La Fayette, with his national guards,” replied he, “or with his army, or with both.”

“La Fayette! La Fayette!” cried I; “and is it possible you can depend on such a man after all we have seen of his conduct?”

“The question no longer is what M. de la Fayette did three years ago,” said he, “but what he can and is willing to do now. Is it not possible for the same man to be inflamed with a love of liberty, so as to be led astray, and afterwards ardently endeavour to crush that unbounded and criminal licence, which he at length perceives to be dangerous to true freedom? At this moment La Fayette is pursuing his romance. He has just now begun to be a believer in the rights of royalty, because he conceives it to be now adopted, settled, and consolidated by the choice and the oaths of the people. But if royalty is as sacred to him by its recent, as it is to us by its ancient titles; if he remains as strictly bound to the mo-

narchy, because it is in the constitution, as we are, because it is in our hearts and our reason, of what importance is this difference to us, since he proceeds with us to the same end? It is his actions, not his motives, we stand in need of."

Though by no means convinced by this reasoning, I could not refuse to transmit it to the king, with a long memorial which M. Malouet gave me on the part of M. de Lally.

Some days after, M. de la Fayette wrote from the army his famous letter of the 16th of June, addressed to the assembly against the Jacobins, and demanding the suppression of their meetings. This letter was greatly applauded by the majority of the assembly and the tribunes; but it irritated the Jacobins to such a degree, that to prove that they were not intimidated by his attack, they excited the insurrection of the 20th of June. The horrible circumstances of that day filled the army with indignation, and encouraged M. de la Fayette
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to appear at the bar of the assembly on the 28th of the same month. In the name of all the officers and foldiers of his army, he demanded the punishment of the authors and accomplices of the crimes and excesses committed on the 20th.

When the king heard, on the morning of the 28th, that M. de la Fayette was arrived from the army, and of the demand he was to make at the bar of the assembly, his expectations were very high respecting the success of that measure: but they were not of long duration; for, although the discourse, pronounced by the general, was as strong as the circumstances exacted, and was heard with applause by the audience; and although he was invited to the honours of the *seance*; yet scarcely had he taken his seat, when his conduct was violently attacked by several deputies, particularly by Vergniaud and Guadet.

They reproached him for having quitted his post without leave, and for attempting to intimidate the assembly in the name of
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the army ; for both of which, they asserted, he well deserved to have a decree of accusation pronounced against him. During those declamations, which were also applauded by the tribunes, M. de la Fayette remained silent and passive ; and thus permitted all the favourable effect produced by the bold step he had taken to be so completely annihilated, that he thought the best thing he could do, was to make his escape from Paris that very night, and to join the army.

M. de la Fayette's appearance at the bar would, in all probability, have had a very different issue, if, previous to his arrival, his friends at Paris had prepared those of the national guards, who were attached to him, for his coming ; if they had made him be accompanied to the assembly by a part of those guards, and had filled the tribunes with the rest ; and if, being thus supported, M. de la Fayette, at the very first sentence of Guadet's speech, had called him to order, and addressed the
president

president in some such terms as the following:

“That member, sir, forgets that I speak here in the name of an army, faithful to the constitution, and ready to shed their blood in fighting against its domestic, as well as its foreign enemies; and that, on the petition of this army, of which I am the bearer, it is the instant business of the assembly to deliberate; more especially as I was obliged by my soldiers, when I left them, to promise to dispatch a courier to inform them of the decision of the assembly at the end of this very *seance*; and I must not dissemble, that if your decision is not conformable to the constitutional demand which I have now expressed in their name, I cannot answer for the consequences.”

M. de la Fayette, however, seems not to have been quite discouraged by the ill success of his embassy; for, on the 10th of July, M. de Lally came again to me, with an air of triumph; and putting a paper into my hands, he said, “Read
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what I am authorised to transmit to the king, and remain afterwards incredulous if you can." It was a long letter written by M. de la Fayette from his army; in which he drew a plan (ready, as he said, for execution) to open the way to the king through his enemies, and to establish him in safety either at Compiègne, or in the north part of France, surrounded by his constitutional guards, and by his faithful army. All this was to be done constitutionally.

I transmitted this letter to the king, who, notwithstanding that his distrust of M. de la Fayette was considerably abated, could never believe that he had it in his power to accomplish the restoration of the monarchy, like another Monk; and, besides, he deemed the plan now proposed but feebly calculated for that purpose. His majesty, therefore, sent me an obliging, but a negative answer, to deliver to M. de Lally, to be by him transmitted to M. de la Fayette. It was in these words;

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"Let him know that I am sensible of his attachment in proposing to incur so much danger; but it would be imprudent to put so many springs in motion at once. The best way he can serve me is to continue to make himself a terror to the factious, by ably performing his duty as a general."

C H A P. XXIX.

A design formed by Santerre of murdering the queen.—Prevented.—One of my letters to the queen taken from my table by a journalist.—The arrival of the Marseillois at Paris.—Measures proposed to the king on that occasion.—A club established under the name of National Club.—Lieutenant's troop,—Mayor of Etampes.

NOTWITHSTANDING his majesty's approbation of the plan presented to him from Messrs. de Montmorin, Malouet, and myself, there was no certainty of its full execution; because the king and queen never could retain a full confidence in any man or set of men, they were apt to give a certain weight to the opinion of others, however opposite. The consequence was, that in the different projects of letters and proclamations, as well as in the measures we proposed, the king adopted some part,
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but added others, which often destroyed the effect of the whole.

Thus, in spite of all our efforts, new errors daily augmented the dangers which threatened the king and monarchy. We disregarded those which were personal, however imminent: our thoughts and wishes were wholly engrossed by the desire of saving that august and unfortunate family, who were too much abandoned; and it required all the zeal and attachment which animated us, not to be discouraged by the continual obstacles which the king's indecision opposed to the success of our measures.

Towards the end of June, or in the beginning of July, a man whom I did not know, whose name was Grammont Carton, and, by his own account, an officer in the *Etat Major* of the army, came to my house betwixt eight and nine o'clock at night; and told me, that he had a secret of the utmost importance to communicate, and which concerned the life of the queen; but, as I was not acquainted with him, he

VOL. II. Z desired,

desired, that, previous to his explaining himself, I should consult her majesty, to whom, he said, he had been personally known ever since the 6th of October 1789. I wrote next day to the queen, informing her of this conversation; but suppressing what related to herself, and desiring to know whether this Grammont Carton was a person to whom I might listen with confidence; and, to save her trouble, I begged her majesty would return my letter, with a simple affirmative, or negative, for answer.

The same day, about twelve o'clock, my letter was returned, with the following verbal answer from the queen :

“ Yes, but with caution.”

Having laid my letter, which had been thus returned, upon the table, I continued to converse for half an hour with the person who had brought it; after which, a journalist of my acquaintance entered my apartment. Before he seated himself, he threw down some papers he had in his hand upon my bureau, and placed his hat above them; then he explained

the occasion of his visit, which was to beg I would lend him a thousand livres to enable him to print a new edition of his account of the insurrection of the 20th of June. His statement of that event, while it was perfectly exact, put the conduct of his majesty in the most favourable point of view ; and was, by that means, calculated to make a happy impression on the minds of the people.

I was the more surpris'd at this demand, as, immediately after the publication of that paper, he had come and represented to me, that it was his intention to publish a second edition, to distribute *gratis* all over the capital and the Fauxbourgs ; but that he could not on account of the present distress of his circumstances. On this representation I gave him 300 livres, which was the sum he required. However, on his representing that his present demand was for a third edition, of which a thousand copies were to be distributed through all the principal towns of the kingdom ; and that he expected only the lend of the money,

which he would repay from the profits of the sale; I agreed to his demand; and, having taken up his hat and papers, he retired. About half an hour after he was gone, I looked for my letter to the queen; and not finding it, concluded that I had burnt it, as had been my intention. About a fortnight after, one of my brothers came to me, with an air of consternation, and told me, that my correspondence with the queen was discovered; and that one of my letters to her majesty had been found. As I was convinced that the queen burnt all my letters which she did not send back to me, I had no doubt but that this was a trick in order to discover, by my uneasiness or my tranquillity, whether I really was in correspondence with her majesty or not; I therefore desired my brother to be quite easy on the subject; and begged that he would try to find out from what quarter the calumny came.

He returned to me next day, and told me that one of his friends, whose intentions, with regard to me, could not be suspected,

pected, had assured him, that his information was from one who had seen the letter ; that it consisted of eight or ten lines, in my hand-writing. Still this did not alarm me. I supposed it a counterfeit letter, in which my hand-writing was imitated.

On the evening of the same day, the baron de Gillier came to me to obtain some information for madame Elizabeth. I spoke to him of the story which had gone abroad, of my correspondence with the queen ; and I asked him if he had heard of it.

“ What is more,” said he, “ I have read your letter to the queen.”

“ Read my letter to the queen ? Impossible !”

“ I repeat it,” said he. “ I read your letter to the queen. But make yourself easy, for I made it be burnt in my presence. In this letter you asked the queen if you might listen with confidence to a particular person, who said that he was known to her majesty, and had an important secret to communicate to you.”

“ But where was that letter ?” said I.

“ In the hands of a journalift, who, the laft time he came to fee you, took it, by miftake, from your table, among fome papers of his own.”

“ You have affuredly rendered me a very great fervice,” said I ; “ for fome people took pains to affure me, that the perfon who was in poffeffion of that letter intended to make me purchafe it at the price of a confiderable fum of money ; which certainly was in his power, becaufe, although there was nothing criminal in the letter, yet at this period, the difcovery of any correſpondence with the queen might have proved fatal to me.”

The day on which I received the queen’s answer, M. Grammont returned to me ; and upon my telling him that I was now authorifed by her majeſty to hear what he had to fay, he affured me he was poſitively informed that Santerre had the project to have the queen affaffinated ; that a grenadier of his battalion had engaged to perpetrate the crime, for a confiderable
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sum of money, a small part of which he had already received; that he had confided the secret to a girl with whom he lived, and whom he would be enabled to marry, by means of the sum he was promised. The girl, who was a washerwoman, entrusted the secret to a female friend, who communicated it to her own lover, who happened to be the hair-dresser of M. Grammont Carton, to whom he communicated the secret, informing him, at the same time, that he knew the grenadier in question, whose figure was sufficiently remarkable, by a large cicatrice in his left cheek; and that the 14th of July, the day of the federation, was the time fixed upon for execution.

In spite of the suspicious channels through which the intelligence came to me, it was of too serious a nature to be neglected. I gave information to M. de la Porte, being convinced that he would take every precaution the circumstance required. At the same time I ordered the justice of peace Buob to place a dozen of spies about the

palace, to watch for the grenadier, of whose figure a description was given, with orders, that as soon as they saw him, to give notice to the officer commanding the nearest post of the guard; because I was informed, by M. de la Porte, that all the commanders of guards had received orders to arrest that fellow.

On the 14th of July, M. Grammont went himself to the chateau. The grenadier appeared at eight o'clock at night, dressed in a plain coat; and although he was perceived by the sentinel of the *porte royale*, yet he had the address to make his escape. He had the impudence, however, to return at eleven the same night, in his uniform, and was taken up at the bottom of the stair leading to the queen's apartments. He was at first remarked by having feathers in his cap of a colour different from those worn by the battalion then on guard, and afterwards completely distinguished by the cicatrice on his cheek. He was immediately conducted to the guard-room. On searching him, a cutlass was
found

found concealed in the lining of his coat. The next morning, just as he was going to be brought before the judge of peace, he was carried off by a band of ruffians, who came to the gates of the chateau on purpose to rescue him.

I was informed of this event by M. Grammont, whom I persuaded to make a formal declaration of the above facts before M. Maingeot, judge of the peace in the section of the Thuilleries, and have the same verified by the testimony of the officers who had been on guard at the queen's apartment. A verbal process of the whole was accordingly made.

This act of duty proved fatal to M. Maingeot. That respectable man was among the victims of the 10th of August. Santerre, who knew that he had drawn up the *proces verbal* respecting the grenadier, sent a band of assassins to his house, who, having murdered him, seized his papers, and brought them in triumph to their worthy chief.

Two days after the 10th, as Grammont himself has since informed me, Santerre made a description of his face and person to be posted on the walls, with a promise of a considerable reward to any who would deliver him to Santerre, dead or alive.

This fact may be true: but as I myself was obliged to remain concealed, from the 10th of August till I made my escape out of France, I had no opportunity of inquiring about it.

The 14th of July was rendered extremely critical, from the following circumstances. The camp of 20,000 men, decreed by the assembly, was prevented from being established, by the king's refusal to sanction the decree. In order to supply this, the Jacobins had taken measures for having all the vagabonds they could engage brought to Paris, under the title of *Fédérés*. Amongst these was the famous band of banditti known by the name of *Marseillois*, who, on the very day of their arrival in Paris, attacked, in the *Champs Elisées*,

Elisées, a detachment of the national guards, who were supposed most devoted to the king, and wounded several officers and soldiers.

Amongst the measures of security which these dangerous bands rendered necessary, that which struck me as the safest and most practicable was to establish, at a house in the Caroufel, opposite to the Thuilleries, an assembly, under the title of the National Club or Association, where all the officers and soldiers of the national guard that could be depended on, and other citizens, well disposed to the king and constitution, might occasionally meet; and in case of any attack on the palace, assemble in arms, for its defence, on the shortest notice.

Buob, who first suggested this scheme to me, proposed, at the same time, to add six or seven hundred auxiliaries, chosen out of the manufactory of Perier, of which several of the principal workmen were zealous royalists. Those alone were to be in the secret; and two of them were to go every morning to the club, and remain the whole day,

day, that they might be ready to give notice for the others to come with their followers as soon as they were required.

The pay of those principals was to be five livres a day, and that of the workmen forty sols on the days they were employed, and ten when they were not. The real destination of this force was to be kept secret from the under-workmen. It was to be given out to them that they were only required to join the national guard, to assist in maintaining order in the capital. They were to wear red caps, and were to be armed with the pikes previously deposited in the club-house ; and in order to avoid receiving Jacobin spies, or persons whose principles were not known, into this association, none were to be admitted but by a majority of three-fourths of the club.

The king approved of the plan, and desired me to defray the expence of it, which amounted to one thousand livres a day, including the other expences of the club, namely, the refreshments, which were given at the lowest price possible, in order

to

to attract the greater number of soldiers. The pikes, *bonnets rouges*, tables, chairs, benches, and other furniture, cost 9000 livres. The establishment was complete in less than four days.

About this time another association of the same kind was formed for the same purpose. It consisted of a number more or less considerable, chosen out of the populace, and commanded by one Lieutaut, formerly officer of the guard national of Marseilles; a man equally brave and intelligent, who had acted a principal part in the insurrection of that city against the revolution during the first national assembly.

I only knew Lieutaut by reputation; but I had employed one of his aid-de-camps with success on the day of the *fête* given to the soldiers of *Chateau Vieux* on their recall from the galleys*.

Besides

* The Swiss regiment of *Chateau Vieux* having joined with the seditious troops at Nancy, against whom M. de Bouillé had been sent, the most culpable had been condemned and sent to the galleys at Brest; but the Jacobins had influence with the assembly to obtain a decree to annul their

Besides being courageous, and entirely devoted to the king, he possessed the talents of varying his countenance, and changing the sound of his voice, so entirely, that he was not to be known for the same person. By this means he sometimes made himself pass for one of the Marseillois ; at other times, for a workman in one or other of the suburbs of Paris, whose accent and manners he could assume with wonderful success. Thus, in those various characters, he gained admission into all the patriotic meetings, and groups ; discovered their projects, and gave me information.

As it was to be dreaded that the Jacobins, ever on the watch, would seize the occasion of the populace returning intoxicated from the *Champ de Mars*, where the

their condemnation, and set them at liberty. Not satisfied with this, they invited the soldiers to Paris, and then prepared a triumphant entertainment for them in the *Champ de Mars*. This entertainment was called *le Fête de Chateau Vieux*.

So different was the treatment which the Jacobins gave to those Swiss who had rebelled, from that which they shewed on the 10th of August to the Swiss who were faithful to the king and constitution.

fête

fête of *Chateau Vieux* was to be held, to excite them to attack the palace, I instructed this agent to do every thing in his power to prevent this; for which purpose I directed him to employ about thirty of his most sober friends to watch over the different groups, admonish them to moderation, entreating them not to disgrace the patriotic *fête* by acts of tumult and excess; and assuring them, that such was the wish of the Jacobins, of Petion, Marat, Robespierre, &c. &c. I gave him 600 livres to enable him to treat his principal agents with a good supper, and five livres each, in the name of a patriotic society. I told him, at the same time, if his endeavours to maintain order were without effect, and if any danger was to be apprehended for the *Chateau*; in that case he was to return before the populace left the *Champ de Mars*, and to give timely notice of the danger by a signal from a particular part of the *Pont Royal* that could be remarked at the *Pavillion de Flore*, at a window, where a man appointed by M. de la Porte

was

was stationed to observe. But fortunately this precaution was unnecessary, as the day passed with much greater tranquillity than was expected. I cannot determine whether this is to be attributed to the vigilance of my agents, or to a plan of the Jacobins, who might possibly have taken measures to prevent any tumult on this occasion, that the Parisians might be accustomed to see the populace assemble without dread.

The *fête* of *Chateau Vieux*, contrived by the Jacobins to irritate the people against the king's pretended tyranny, had all the success they could wish. The soldiers who had revolted, and who justly merited death, were carried in a triumphal car to the *Champ de Mars*, where the absurd populace, under the guidance of the infamous Collot d'Herbois, proclaimed them martyrs of liberty, victims of despotism; and, as such, had caressed, and given them money, over and above a considerable sum raised by a general contribution.

That criminal farce was but too well calculated to familiarise the people with the

idea of revolt ; to encourage them in it ; and by this means entirely extinguish the faint remains of respect they had still retained for the king and his authority.

Buob, whose zeal was always active, proposed to me to obliterate the impression of this *fête* by giving another in honour of the *Mayor d'Estampes*, who had just been massacred, by a popular insurrection, while discharging the duties of his place, and who was very generally regretted.

I mentioned the proposal to the king, who approved of it, and suggested the means of rendering the *fête* more solemn and striking.

“ This *fête* is very well imagined,” said his majesty ; “ and it will have still more effect if the motion comes from the sections or the municipality.”

Buob undertook to have the motion made in the sections, and in the *Council de la Commune*, by means of his adherents, who would represent it as the desire of all good citizens ; many of whom had already subscribed for defraying the expence of the

fête. In reality, the sum of 10,000 livres, which the king had authorised me to give, was prepared as the produce of an anonymous subscription of above 200 contributors.

The *fête* was accordingly voted by the sections and the municipality of Paris, in spite of all the manœuvres of the Jacobins to prevent it. Nothing was omitted to render the celebration splendid and affecting: the hymns and inscriptions were composed with great judgment, and numerous pamphlets were distributed, execrating the plots and crimes of the factions. But such resources only produced a momentary effect. Those were but weak measures to oppose against ferocious monsters, whose legal extermination was absolutely necessary for the safety of the king and of the state.

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

Lettre de Condorcet au Roi.

“ Du Lundi, 6 Fevrier.

“ **L**'ASSEMBLÉE nationale, sire, m'a chargé de vous faire connoître qu'elle se bornoit à demander l'exécution entière de la loi du 17 Juin, et qu'elle ne mettoit point de différence dans ses députations quel que fut le nombre des membres qui les composoient, elle sent que rien ne doit interrompre les communications entre elle et vous, et elle veut faire cesser tout différent à cet égard.

Le président de l'assemblée nationale,
CONDORCET.”

No. II.

Lettre au Roi.

“ **O**N a dû proposer au roi de ne faire aucune mention de la lettre du président de l'assemblée ; je pense au contraire très fortement que cette insulte tolérée en annonce et en amenera incessamment une suite d'autres beaucoup plus graves, et je crois qu'il est de la plus grande importance que le roi écrive aujourd'hui à l'assemblée la lettre dont j'ai l'honneur de lui adresser le projet ; si sa majesté l'approuve, elle pourra faire appeler sur le champ les ministres et leur proposer cette lettre comme son avis personnel ; il seroit bon qu'elle fut écrite de la main du roi, et que mon écriture ne parût pas.”

Projet de lettre du Roi à l'assemblée.

“ Messieurs,

“ La nation, en me reconnoissant pour son, roi m'a confié le dépôt de sa dignité inséparable de la couronne : il n'est
aucune

aucune circonstance où je puisse y renoncer ;
je vous renvoye la lettre que M. le Président
ma fait remettre hier par un huissier ;
la constitution a fixé la forme de la corres-
pondance de l'assemblée nationale avec le
roi ; je ne dois recevoir, et je ne recevrai
d'elle que des messages ou des décrets, m'en
rapportant au surplus pour les égards qui
me sont dûs aux sentimens que le peuple
Français a toujours montrés pour son roi."

No. III.

Lettre au Roi.

“ **I**L a été fort question au comité d’hier au soir de la maison civile du roi ; on a déjà formé un projet de liste composé de trente personnes ; la discussion sur le plan de la maison civile est renvoyée au comité de Mardi ; on doit consulter l’ancien almanac de Versailles et celui de la cour de Londres.

“ Comme je n’ai d’autre désir à cet égard, que celui de présenter au roi un plan, et des personnes qui lui conviennent, j’ose supplier sa majesté de vouloir bien me faire connoître ses intentions ; je ne négligerai rien pour les faire prévaloir au comité sans laisser soupçonner le moins de monde que le roi m’ait donné cette marque de confiance, que je n’ambitionne que pour pouvoir donner à sa majesté une nouvelle preuve de mon respect et de mon dévouement sans bornes.”

No. IV.

Lettre de M. de Lessart au Roi.

“ JE me suis rendu ce soir entre 10 et 11 heures chez le ministre de la justice, comme j'avois eû l'honneur d'en prévenir le roi, j'y ai trouvé non seulement M. de Bertrand et M. Tarbé, mais aussi M. Cahier de Gerville. Presque aussitôt est arrivé M. de la Fayette que le Garde des Scéaux avoit déjà vû dans la journée. M. de la Fayette nous a dit qu'il auroit souhaité pouvoir concilier les ministres, que cela lui avoit toujours parû très difficile, attendu l'opposition subsistante entre M. de Narbonne et M. de Bertrand; mais qu'aujourd'hui au point où les choses étoient portées, il ne pouvoit plus s'en mêler; il s'est fondé sur la publicité donnée aux lettres des généraux, et surtout à la réponse que lui avoit faite M. de Narbonne; et il a déclaré qu'il n'avoit aucune part à cette

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publicité ; qu'il n'y avoit point donné son consentement, et qu'il n'en avoit été instruit que par la lecture même du journal. Après cette explication qui a été froide et courte, il s'est retiré.

“ A peine étoit il sorti que M. Cahier a fait éclater son indignation de la conduite de M. de Narbonne ; il la caractérisée de la manière la plus forte ; et il a fini par dire, qu'il ne falloit absolument pas qu'il remit le pied au conseil ; mais en même tems il a dit que, ne se diffimulant point l'effet que pourroit produire le renvoi de M. de Narbonne, il ne voyoit d'autre manière de tempérer cet effet, que la démission volontaire mais simultanée de M. de Bertrand.

“ M. de Bertrand a observé que sa situation ne lui permettoit pas de donner sa démission dans le moment actuel ; il a dit qu'il la donneroit volontiers après l'époque du 15 Mars : que ç'avoit toujours été son dessein, et qu'on y pouvoit compter.

“ M. le Garde des Sceaux a appuyé M. de Bertrand et a dit que, ce seroit compromettre la dignité du roi, et la considéra-

tion du ministère, que de céder dans une pareille circonstance.

“ M. Cahier a insisté avec beaucoup de force ; il s'est fondé sur la disposition actuelle des esprits, sur l'intérêt de la chose publique, sur celui du roi ; il a été fortement seconde par M. Tarbe, de manière que M. de Bertrand a crû devoir condescendre à offrir sa démission aussitôt que le roi auroit répondu aux observations de l'assemblée nationale ; mais M. Cahier a insisté de nouveau, et il a déclaré que si M. de Bertrand ne donnoit pas sa démission immédiatement après que le roi auroit demandé celle de M. de Narbonne, il se croiroit, lui Cahier, obligé de donner la sienne dès ce matin.

“ J'avois pris jusque là peu de part à cette discussion, étant au fonds pleinement de l'avis de M. de Gerville ; mais croyant devoir des ménagemens à la situation vraiment cruelle de M. de Bertrand, néanmoins voyant que les choses étoient très avancées, j'ai observé à M. de Bertrand que, puisqu'il étoit déterminé au sacrifice, il falloit le
faire

faire d'une manière qui fut profitable au roi et à la chose publique ; et qu'il me paroïssoit très utile qu'il donnât sa démission dans la journée, afin de neutraliser en quelque sorte le renvoi de M. de Narbonne.

“ M. le Garde des Scéaux, qui avoit été très frappé de la résolution très prononcée de M. de Gerville, de quitter sur le champ, si M. de Bertrand ne quittoit pas le ministère le même jour que M. de Narbonne ; M. le Garde des Scéaux, dis-je, s'est rangé au même avis. M. de Bertrand y a consenti, et nous avons rédigé en commun la lettre qu'il doit écrire au roi et la réponse que nous proposerons à sa majesté de lui faire.

“ Cette longue et importante discussion s'est passée sans la moindre aigreur, sans aucun autre intérêt que celui du roi et de la chose publique, et avec les formes et les expressions qui conviennent à des gens qui s'estiment réciproquement.

“ Je dois observer que dans la réponse qui sera proposée au roi pour M. de Bertrand, sa majesté exige qu'il continue ses fonctions

fonctions jusqu'à ce qu'elle lui ait donné un successeur. A l'égard de M. de Narbonne, nous avons pensé que rien n'étoit plus pressant que de le remplacer, et qu'il seroit essentiel que son successeur pût dès ce soir prendre séance au conseil. Ce successeur, je dois le dire au roi, nous a paru devoir être le chevalier de Graves; et nous nous sommes d'autant plus attachés à cette idée, qu'après avoir bien cherché, nous n'en avons trouvé aucun autre. En conséquence M. le Garde des Sceaux, qui l'avoit à tout événement fondé vaguement hier dans la journée, est allé chez lui à une heure de matin, mais il n'étoit pas encore rentré, M. le Garde des Sceaux a laissé un billet à sa porte pour le prier de passer à la chancellerie de bonne heure afin de s'assurer qu'il accepteroit dans le cas où le roi jetteroit les yeux sur lui.

“ Nous avons aussi pensé qu'il seroit nécessaire, avant tout, que le roi fit venir les trois généraux, pour les empêcher de donner leur démission : chose à laquelle on ne manquera pas de les exciter par tous les moyens

moyens possibles. Les bonnes raisons ne manqueront pas au roi ; et il est certain que ce feroit de leur part, manquer à tous les devoirs, et même à leur serment, que de vouloir quitter dans une conjoncture pareille. Néanmoins comme rien n'est plus essentiel, le roi jugera peut-être qu'il seroit très utile que la reine assistât à cet entretien, afin de réunir tous les genres d'intérêts et tous les motifs.

“ Il y aura aussi quelques précautions à prendre relativement à la garde soldée ; car on ne peut pas se dissimuler qu'il seroit possible que les malveillans cherchassent à profiter de cette circonstance pour exciter du trouble. On dit que M. de Boissieu n'est pas à Paris. Qui est-ce qui le remplace ? Ne pourroit-on pas le faire venir ?

“ Tous ces détails seront portés au roi dans la matinée par le Garde des Sceaux ; il a paru convenable que ce fut lui de préférence qui traitât cette affaire, comme l'ancien, et en quelque sorte le chef du conseil.

“ Le roi pourroit faire venir ensuite M. de Gerville, auquel sa majesté diroit qu'elle adopte

adopte en tout son avis ; et auquel elle demanderoit de retarder un peu l'époque à laquelle il veut définitivement quitter le ministère. Cette époque est le 25. de ce mois, et il seroit à désirer qu'elle fut différée, ne fut-ce que de huit jours. Il sera bien bon que la reine mêle ses invitations à celles du roi : le succès en sera plus assuré.

“ Enfin le roi et la reine devront de grands témoignages d'intérêt et de bonté à M. de Bertrand injustement sacrifié, et qui en cédant à la nécessité des circonstances, donne au roi une des plus grandes preuves d'attachement qu'il soit possible de lui offrir : c'est un homme de mérite, et qu'il ne faut pas regarder comme entièrement perdu pour le service du roi.

“ Je finirai en observant que la faute de M. de Narbonne est si évidente et si grave, qu'il est essentiel de la saisir, si le roi en effet ne préféré pas de lui abandonner sa confiance : mais alors il n'y a pas un moment à perdre. Toute explication seroit superflue, et manqueroit de dignité, et il y au-
roit

roit d'autant plus d'inconvénient à laisser venir ce soir M. de Narbonne au conseil, qu'il ne manqueroit pas d'apporter un projet de discours très patriotique du roi à l'assemblée nationale, et qu'il diroit le lendemain s'il étoit renvoyé, que c'est à cause de ce discours qu'il est tombé dans la disgrâce du roi.

“ Je prends la liberté de rappeler au roi les trois généraux ; il me semble qu'il faut tâcher de les voir ensemble, et de les voir s'il est possible, avant qu'ils aient été circonvenus. Le roi pourroit se dispenser de leur faire part de sa résolution ; il suffiroit en parlant de leurs lettres de leur demander si en effet, ayant juré d'être fidèles à la nation et au roi, ils ne veulent servir qu'autant que M. de Narbonne seroit ministre ; et le roi pourroit les assurer que, supposé qu'il fit quelque changement à cet égard, son choix ne tomberoit que sur un homme distingué par son patriotisme et ses talens.

“ Vendredy, 5 heures du matin.”

No. V.

Lettre au Roi.

“ JE supplie le roi de vouloir bien me renvoyer les observations qui ont dû lui être présentées contre moi, par les commissaires députés à la sanction, et auxquelles il est important de répondre le plutôt possible.

“ Les ministres ont été assemblés hier en comité jusqu'à trois heures après minuit, à l'occasion des lettres que M. de Narbonne a fait imprimer dans les journaux. Cette conduite, aussi lâche que criminelle, les a tous revoltés; ils doivent proposer ce matin à votre majesté le renvoi de M. de Narbonne, qu'aucun de nous ne peut plus voir; mais comme la femme dangereuse qui le gouverne pourroit profiter de l'état de crise où nous sommes, pour provoquer une insurrection contre le château, sous

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prétexte

prétexte qu'on renvoye un ministre patriote, parce qu'il à dénoncé un ministre aristocrate, j'ai pensé que mon attachement sans borne à la personne du roi me faisoit un devoir de lui offrir ma démission aussitôt que la retraite de M. de Narbonne seroit déterminée. Je n'en resterai pas moins inviolablement dévoué au service de votre majesté, et mon unique ambition sera toujours d'être à portée de lui donner les preuves les plus essentielles du profond respect, et de tous les sentimens qui m'attachent à sa personne.

“ Ce 9 Mars.”

No. VI.

Lettre du Roi à l'assemblée nationale, à l'occasion des observations qu'elle avoit adressées le 8 Mars à S. M. contre le ministre de la marine.

“ Messieurs,

“ Paris, le 10 Mars 1792.

“ J'AI examiné les observations que le zèle et la sollicitude de l'assemblée nationale l'ont portée à m'adresser sur la conduite du ministre de la marine ; je recevrai toujours avec plaisir les communications qu'elle croira utile d'entretenir avec moi. Les observations qui m'ont été remises de la part de l'assemblée me paroissent absolument conformes aux dénonciations sur lesquelles elle avoit déclaré n'y avoir lieu de délibérer. Je m'étois fait rendre compte alors des réponses que M. Bertrand avoit présentées contre les différens griefs, et j'avois porté le même jugement que l'assemblée. Depuis, aucune plainte fondée ne

VOL. II.

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s'est fait entendre relativement aux différentes parties de son administration, et tout ce qui me revient de la part des colons, du commerce, et des gens de mer, me présente des témoignages de son zèle et de l'utilité de ses services ; enfin aucune violation de la loi ne lui étant reprochée, je croirois manquer à la justice de lui retirer ma confiance ; au reste les ministres savent bien que le seul moyen de l'obtenir et de la conserver, est de faire exécuter les loix avec énergie et avec fidélité.

(Signé)

LOUIS,

et plus bas M. S. F. DUPORT."

No. VII.

*Extrait du Mercure Français du Samedi,
4 Février 1792.*

“ Paris, 25 Janvier 1792.

“ VOUS rendrés compte sûrement, monsieur, de l’odieuse attaque dont le ministre actuel de la marine est l’objet. Ses discours à l’assemblée, l’évidence de ses moyens justificatifs, déconcertent un instant ses ennemis, et ne les lassent pas. Je vous déclare que c’est sa faute ; et que si l’on pouvoit s’indigner de la patience et de la modération d’un homme honnête et loyal, tel que M. *Bertrand*, je l’appellerois un homme foible. Je lui reprocherois amèrement ses ménagemens pour des hommes aussi méchants qu’audacieux, et qu’il ne tenoit qu’à lui de démasquer aux yeux de l’assemblée. M. *Bertrand* a reçu, j’en suis certain, les pièces que je vous

envoyé. Il est notoire à Brest, que M. de Marigny, commandant de la marine, en a obtenu la communication de la municipalité, et j'ai confronté moi-même les copies qui m'ont été adressées, avec celles qui sont au bureau de la marine. Ainsi je vous en garantis l'authenticité. Quelle est donc la raison qui peut justifier le silence de M. *Bertrand* sur cette atrocité des Sieurs *Cavelier* et *Malassis*?—Un ministre qui a la preuve des intrigues de club, des provocations incendiaires de deux députés, n'ose pas publier de tels faits ! Et il espère échapper ainsi à de nouvelles perfidies ! Non, il n'y a jamais de composition à faire avec les méchans ; ce n'est pas générosité ; c'est foiblesse que de leur pardonner ; et tout estimable qu'est M. *Bertrand*, je suis fâché pour lui, qu'on ait à opposer à sa réputation de fermeté, de tels ménagements pour M. M. *Cavelier* et *Malassis*, &c."

Extrait

Extrait de la lettre écrite au club de Brest, par les Sieurs Cavelier et Malaffis, députés à l'assemblée nationale, et arrivée à Brest le Vendredi 11 Décembre.

“ QUANT à l'événement du Sieur *Lajaille*; malgré que nous prenions intérêt à lui, l'insigne aristocrate ne l'a que trop mérité; ne soyés point inquiet sur son arrestation, il est en sûreté en prison, il en sortira quand il pourra. Nous ignorons sous quelle couleur le *rusé Marigny* aura peint cette correction au Sieur *Bertrand*; nous sommes étonnés que ce dernier n'en ait pas encore rendu compte à l'assemblée; mais nous avons remis les pièces au président, et nous attendons l'imposteur de pied ferme. Vous avés raison de l'accuser, de le dénoncer; nous verrons comment il se lavera d'avoir dit qu'il ne manquoit aucun officier de la marine dans les ports. Quant au commandement qu'il donne au Sieur *Lajaille Klerec* et autres contre-révolutionnaires, nous ne pouvons malheureusement aller contre; mais dans peu vous verrés com-

ment nous les traiterons, et comment nous déjouerons leurs infâmes complots. Nous détestons les Bertrand, les Marigny ; l'un quitte sa place, parcequ'il voit que vous découvrez toutes ses menées ; s'il eut été à la dernière séance, il eut entendu bien faire ses éloges : l'autre veut la garder pour mieux servir les projets de ses complices. Veillés, veillés, il est un coup funeste combiné, qui, du sein de la capitale, s'étend sur les frontières, même au delà du Rhin. Tenés bon plutôt que de céder ; nous périrons avant vous."

*Extrait d'une autre lettre des mêmes Députés,
en date du 5 Novembre 1791.*

" LES émigrés redoublent d'efforts ; les prêtres non-affermés les secondent de leur mieux ; tous les ennemis de la patrie se réunissent pour conspirer sa perte. Nous verrons dans quatre mois si les Français sont dignes de la liberté. On ne peut plus se le dissimuler, il y aura une crise, elle est nécessaire, elle est même désirable. *Nous ne serons tranquilles, que lorsque nous aurons ex-*
terminé

terminé les parjures, les traitres que nous avons épargnés trop long-tems. Passé un certain tems la prudence est une foiblesse, la patience n'est plus de saison, et la générosité est une extravagance."

No. VIII.

Note sur quelques insurrections qui se sont manifestées à bord des bâtimens de l'Etat, & des Juris qui ont été tenus à cette occasion.

Juillet 1790.

L'Alceste, commandée par M. de Beaurepaire, en station dans les mers du Levant.

LE nommé Pifard, cuisinier du capitaine, insulte gravement un officier. M. de Beaurepaire le chasse de son service & veut le faire débarquer. L'équipage se soulève, prend les armes, injurie le capitaine, & s'oppose au débarquement de Pifard; il exige même qu'on lui donne un certificat de fidélité.

Quelque temps après, M. de Beaurepaire chasse un kirlanguich qui paroissoit suspect; plusieurs hommes de l'équipage se permettent d'ordonner la manœuvre. Le kirlanguich

guich se fauve à Saint-Nicolas, il exhibe ses patentes qui sont reconnues valables ; l'équipage veut couler bas le kirlanguich, et, sans respecter l'asyle du pavillon, il demande la mort de deux officiers de ce bâtiment, et d'un autre, qui s'étoient rendus à bord de l'*Alceste*.

Précédemment, dans une relâche à Paros, ils s'étoient permis des excès de tout genre contre les habitans de cette île.

Point de punition.

La Capricieuse, commandée par M. de Boubée, à Rochefort.

Décembre 1790, & Janvier 1791.

M. de Boubée descendu à terre, apprend qu'il se tient des propos fâcheux sur sa conduite, et que son équipage a le projet de le livrer au peuple. Le prétexte du mécontentement est que cet officier n'a pas voulu recevoir devant la Martinique, un canot portant pavillon national, tandis qu'il en avoit reçu deux envoyés avec ce même pavillon, par M. de Damas, et que son chef lui avoit fait depuis le signal de ne pas
* com-

communiquer avec la terre. M. de Boubée, par ordre de M. de Vaudreuil, se rend à bord, il y reste un jour : de nouveaux avis l'engagent à quitter la frégate ; il veut partir, l'équipage s'y oppose, le force à remonter dans sa chambre, le fouille, fait une visite générale, et met un garde à sa porte. Le commandant du port lui ordonne les arrêts : la municipalité vient le prendre à bord et le conduire à l'amiral.

Juri d'accusation contre l'équipage notamment contre cinq hommes qui avoient excité le désordre. Ils sont déchargés d'accusation.

Sur la plainte d'un pilotin embarqué sur la *Capricieuse*, juri, conseil martial pour juger M. de Boubée. Cet officier est également déchargé d'accusation.

Avril 1791.

Le Bricq la Levrette, commandé par M. Deniau, Sous-lieutenant à la Martinique.

Augustin Haman, maître d'équipage, donne à souper à quelques amis ; il prie le capitaine de lui envoyer deux bouteilles de
vin,

vin, on les lui donne ; après souper il veut reconduire les convives, M. Deuiau s'y oppose. Le maître insiste. Sur de nouveaux refus, il vomit des injures atroces accompagnées de menaces ; le capitaine donne ordre de mettre Haman aux fers ; l'équipage prend parti pour celui-ci : on le débarque le lendemain par ordre du général.

Point de juri.

Août 1791.

La Flûte le Dromadaire, commandée par M. Sebire de Beauchêne, Lieutenant de vaisseau à Rochefort.

Les volontaires embarqués à bord de cette flûte, demandent qu'un de leurs camarades dont la conduite méritoit les plus vifs reproches, soit désarmé. Ce vœu est prononcé par la presque totalité de l'équipage. Le capitaine d'armes et le maître d'équipage excitent une fermentation considérable, pour que le volontaire ne soit pas débarqué. Le bâtiment est obligé de rentrer dans le port.

Juri,

Juri, dont le résultat est de déclarer
les accusés déchargés d'accusation.

Août 1791.

*La Gabarre la Lionne, commandée par M.
Faubert, Sous-lieutenant de vaisseau à
Rochefort.*

Une chaloupe est arrêtée par les matelots de la gabarre, sous le prétexte que cette embarcation est chargée de contrebande ; on se refuse à l'ordre de la relâcher donné par le capitaine. Le Sieur Piechaud, maître pilote, excite le tumulte, et l'insurrection se manifeste. L'équipage dresse procès-verbal et veut le porter à la municipalité. Ordre du capitaine de ne laisser descendre personne à terre : au mépris de cet ordre, les députés nommés par l'équipage se rendent à la municipalité. Le capitaine ordonne à Piechaud de se rendre aux arrêts il désobéit.

Juri, conseil de justice. Le maître pilote est déchargé d'accusation.

Août

Août 1791.

La Frégatè la Galathée, commandée par M. de Cambis, Major de vaisseau en rade à Brest.

Un officier ordonne l'exercice de la manœuvre, les gabiers défobéissent ; douze hommes de l'équipage se montrent les plus insubordonnés et les plus séditieux ; le commandant du port donne ordre de les faire débarquer. Le maître de l'équipage demande à descendre à terre, et, sur le refus qui lui en est fait, il se permet des réflexions déplacées ; on le débarque. Représentations de la part du club ; on n'y accède pas.

Point de juri.

L'Embuscade.

L'Assemblée Nationale est informée que l'équipage de cette frégate a contraint le capitaine et l'état-major à la ramener en France, & qu'elle est encore dans le port de Rochefort. Le club de Bordeaux vient récemment d'envoyer des émissaires pour

engager les membres de la société de Rochefort à s'opposer au rembarquement du capitaine et de l'état major : aussi ces officiers, bien convaincus qu'ils opposeroient vainement leur courage à l'ascendant du club sur l'esprit des matelots, n'ont pas même tenté cette lutte inégale, & se sont retirés.

On ne parle point des insurrections à bord des bâtimens stationnés aux Antilles, parce qu'on ne seroit pas en état d'en produire les détails ; mais on ne peut les révoquer en doute.

Un député extraordinaire de la Guadeloupe, qui vient d'arriver à Paris, a annoncé qu'il étoit porteur de lettres originales par lesquelles des membres de différens clubs excitoient les équipages à la révolte.

Octobre 1791.

La Frégate la Fidelle, commandée par M. de Rosily, Major de vaisseau à Brest.

Des matelots sont convaincus d'avoir volé de l'étamine à pavillon ; on en trouve
des

des morceaux dans leurs coffres et dans leurs sacs.

Juri. Tous sont déchargés d'accusation.

Extrait sommaire *des Comptes successivement rendus de plusieurs insurrections qui se sont manifestées dans les Ports.*

B R E S T,

26 JUILLET 1789.

M. le Large, directeur du port, éprouve une scène désagréable de la part de la populace, sous le prétexte qu'il a tenu des propos indiscrets qu'il désavoue. Cet officier est obligé de quitter Brest.

Escadre de Brest, commandée par M. d'Albert.

1790.

Septembre.

Le code pénal est lû à bord du vaisseau l'*Entreprenant*, et rejeté.

Insurrection à bord du vaisseau le *Tourville*, sans motif.

L'équipage du vaisseau la *Ferme* ne veut pas partir, sans avoir reçu de nouvelles avances. Des billets anonymes circulent dans

dans toute l'escadre pour exciter les équipages à faire la même demande.

Un matelot du vaisseau *le Léopard* tient les propos les plus séditieux à bord du vaisseau *le Patriote*, & insulte M. Huan, major de ce vaisseau. M. d'Albert ayant demandé si cet homme étoit ivre, le renvoie attendre la fin de son ivresse. Fermentation parmi l'équipage. Le patron de canot se rend chez M. d'Albert, et lui annonce d'un ton absolu que le matelot ne doit pas être puni, & qu'on ne souffrira pas qu'il le soit : le tumulte augmente. M. d'Entrecasteaux quitte son vaisseau. M. d'Albert se rend à bord du *Patriote*, et cherche en vain à ramener l'équipage. En descendant à terre, il est insulté, on crie au patron de faire chavirer son canot.

Un grand nombre de soldats et matelots du *Majestueux* s'emparent de la chaloupe ; ils descendent à terre, après avoir refusé de faire l'exercice de la manœuvre.

A bord du vaisseau *l'Apollon*, on fait la motion de jeter trois officiers à la mer.

MM. Hector, d'Albert, de Marigny, d'Entrecasteaux, et Huon, sont mandés à l'hôtel-de-ville pour lire publiquement leur correspondance. On leur demande des copies de leurs lettres, et une attestation qui certifie que l'arrivée du vaisseau *le Léopard* n'avoit pas causé d'insurrection en ville.

Octobre.

Les commissaires du Roi sont mal reçus par l'équipage du *Majestueux* ; leur séance est longue, tumultueuse et inutile. On demande à grands cris le renvoi du général et du capitaine du vaisseau. Les commissaires ne croient pas pouvoir, sans se compromettre, aller à bord des autres vaisseaux de l'escadre.

L'équipage du vaisseau *la Ferme* demande le débarquement de M. du Clefmeur, major, et sur le refus qui lui est fait, il exige du capitaine la promesse que cet officier ne fera aucun service à bord.

Un matelot de *la Bellone* frappe un officier : l'équipage ne veut pas souffrir qu'il soit puni suivant la loi, et demande à le

punir lui-même. Ce matelot est débarqué, ce qui, dans la circonstance, étoit plutôt une faveur qu'une punition.

M. d'Albert donne sa démission.

*Escadre de Brest, sous le Commandement de
M. de Souillac.*

Octobre 1790.

Le plus mauvais esprit règne parmi les équipages ; ils insultent grièvement tous les officiers qui vont en rade.

Insurrection à bord du *Jupiter* relativement aux vivres.

Le détachement de Poitou, en garnison sur *la Réunion*, veut exiger qu'on lui donne en avance du vin ; il veut forcer la cambuse : on s'y oppose. Les soldats tiennent les plus mauvais propos sur le lieutenant chargé du détail et sur le commis, et demandent que celui-ci soit débarqué.

Sur la corvette *la Perdrix*, des matelots s'emparent de la chaloupe, et vont porter plainte contre le capitaine de ce qu'il ne veut pas débarquer un homme qui déplaît à l'équipage.

Un

Un officier du vaisseau l'*Amérique* est gravement insulté.

L'équipage de l'*Auguste* envoie une députation à MM. les commissaires du Roi, pour se plaindre de ce qu'on ne leur donnoit pas assez de légumes. Les commissaires se transportent à bord ; ils menacent un homme de le faire débarquer : celui-ci interpelle l'équipage et se met sous sa protection. Tous s'écrient qu'ils ne souffriront pas qu'on le débarque : on est forcé de laisser cette insurrection impunie.

A bord du même vaisseau, & sous le même prétexte du manque de légumes, on avoit injurié deux officiers, on leur avoit porté le poing au visage : on prend encore le parti de supporter ces insultes.

L'équipage du vaisseau l'*Auguste* chasse, de sa propre autorité, un maître d'équipage, et se refuse à le recevoir.

M. de Terrasson, major de vaisseau, est également renvoyé par les gens de l'*Amérique*.

A bord du *Majestueux*, un cambusier qui avoit battu un soldat, est mis aux fers.

Deux cents hommes, presque tous novices matelots, brisent les fers de ce cambusier.

Novembre.

Une députation des marins et soldats embarqués sur l'escadre, viennent lire à M. de Souillac, une adresse à l'Assemblée Nationale, laquelle contenoit des injures contre les officiers de la marine.

Les soldats embarqués sur l'*Amérique*, disent au commandant qu'ils sont assez gros et grands pour favoir ce qu'ils ont à faire, et qu'ils ne demanderont plus la permission d'aller à terre : effectivement, depuis cette annonce, ils vont à terre sans permission.

Le maître d'équipage du *Majestueux* ayant voulu s'opposer au tumulte qui avoit lieu sur le gaillard d'avant, est colleté par un matelot : celui-ci est mis aux fers. Plusieurs hommes étant venus pour le mettre en liberté. M. de Marailles, lieutenant de vaisseau, accourt ; le prisonnier s'élance sur cet officier, qui se recule et met le sabre à la main ; un matelot armé d'une bûche, veut le frapper par derrière ; il est arrêté par un

un officier, la garde est appelée, les deux matelots coupables sont mis aux fers.

Escadre commandée par M. de Bougainville.

Novembre 1790.

Un matelot du vaisseau le *Duguai-Trouin* se fait donner du vin à l'aide d'un billet contrefait du lieutenant en pied; on le fait mettre aux fers. L'équipage brise les fers, et s'oppose à ce que cet homme soit envoyé en prison.

Insurrection à bord du *Téméraire*, de l'*Amérique* et de la *Surveillante*. L'équipage de l'*Amérique* brise les fers d'un matelot qui avoit été condamné à cette punition, et les jette à la mer. Dix-sept mutins de ce vaisseau sont débarqués.

Une punition infligée à un matelot du *Jupiter*, excite une émeute générale à bord de ce vaisseau; l'équipage vouloit s'emparer des embarcations, et venir à terre.

Décembre.

La disette de vin oblige de donner aux équipages le déjeûner en eau-de-vie : quelques-uns la refusent, d'autres la prennent avec des murmures ; on punit les plus mutins ; l'insurrection est plus forte à la caserne des matelots que dans la rade.

Janvier 1791.

Un matelot frappe violemment un maître d'équipage, et lui démet le bras : le conseil de justice condamne le coupable à la calé.

Mai,

M. de la Porte-Vezins, alors commandant de la Marine, est assailli chez lui par une troupe de soldats armés qui le constituent prisonnier dans sa maison, en plaçant des sentinelles intérieures et extérieures, pour empêcher à la fois qu'il ne sorte, et qu'aucun officier ne communique du dehors avec lui.

Le

Le motif de cette scène de révolte est d'obtenir, au profit de la troupe, le payement des sommes qu'elle réclamoit. Ce commandant est contraint d'en donner l'ordre.

Après cet acte de violence, M. de la Porte-Vezins sentant que son autorité et sa personne sont compromises, demande et obtient la permission de quitter le commandement.

Au mois de Septembre 1790, M. de Margni, major-général, avoit été grièvement insulté, et on avoit planté une potence devant sa porte, sans qu'aucun sujet de plainte, aucun prétexte, eussent parû donner lieu à un aussi sanglant outrage.

TOULON.

Affaire de M. d'Albert.

1^{er} Décembre 1789.

Le 30 Novembre, M. d'Albert renvoya de l'arsenal deux maîtres de manœuvre non-entretenus, qui avoient donné des sujets de mécontentement.

Le lendemain 1^{er} Décembre, on vint annoncer à ce commandant, qui étoit dans le port, qu'une députation du Conseil permanent et de la Municipalité demandoit à lui parler, soit chez lui, soit à la porte de l'arsenal, soit à l'hôtel de ville. M. d'Albert se rendit chez lui, entouré d'une populace nombreuse qui l'injurioit et se dispoisoit à l'attaquer. Rendus à l'hôtel du commandant, les consuls demandèrent la grace des deux hommes qui avoient été renvoyés la veille, et l'obtinrent à force d'instances.

Pendant ce temps, deux détachemens de cinquante canonniers-matelots étoient en bataille sur la place d'armes; M. d'Albert consentit à les faire rentrer dans les casernes, sur l'affurance que les consuls lui donnèrent que la milice nationale contiendrait le peuple. Cependant la foule augmentoit à tout moment, on jetoit des pierres aux fenêtres, tout annonçoit la plus violente effervescence. En vain M. d'Albert demanda la proclamation de la loi martiale, la Municipalité s'y refusa. Le tumulte alloit toujours croissant; M. de
Bon-

Bonneval fut blessé à la main et à la tête ; M. de Saint-Julien, qui avoit déjà été insulté et désarmé, fut assailli sur la place, renversé par terre, blessé de plusieurs coups ; il alloit perdre la vie, lorsqu'un officier de la garde nationale et un volontaire l'arrachèrent à ses assassins. M. d'Albert sortit alors de l'hôtel, accompagné de quelques officiers, pour le dégager ; et sans avoir employé la force, ni même la menace, ils rentrèrent avec M. de Saint-Julien.

L'attroupement sembloit alors se dissiper ; mais au moment où tout paroissoit rentrer dans l'ordre, un certain nombre de volontaires ayant pénétré dans l'hôtel, demandèrent à grands cris qu'on leur livrât M. de Broves, sous le prétexte qu'il avoit ordonné le rassemblement des canonniers-matelots. On fut obligé de leur abandonner cet officier. Bientôt après ils enfoncèrent les portes, et voulurent s'emparer de M. de Villages ; enfin ils se saisirent de M. d'Albert, et après lui avoir arraché son

épée,

épée, après avoir fait la même insulte à MM. de Bonneval et de Villages, on les traîna aux prisons du palais à travers les huées et les insultes de la populace. M. d'Albert reçut deux blessures, et fut mis au cachot avec les compagnons de son infortune.

Le peuple, dont la rage n'étoit pas encore assouvie, chercha M. Gautier, directeur des constructions, pour le conduire également dans les prisons; mais cet officier qui avoit couru les plus grands dangers, fut assez heureux pour s'échapper.

Huit jours après, M. de Castellet qui avoit été blessé le premier Décembre, et M. d'Albert qui avoit eu plusieurs accès de fièvre, se rendirent à l'hôpital: le peuple s'assembla tumultueusement, on les fit sortir de leur lit, ils furent obligés de traverser la ville en robe de chambre, soutenus l'un et l'autre par des volontaires, et on les reserra plus étroitement dans leur prison.

Affaire

Affaire de M. le Commandeur de Glandèves.

Mai 1790.

Le 3 Mai, un nombreux attroupement se porta chez M. le commandeur de Glandèves : on lui fit quelques demandes auxquelles il accéda ; on affecta de ne pas ajouter foi à ses réponses, et on l'entraîna avec violence à l'hôtel de ville. Pendant le trajet, cet officier général fut sans cesse menacé de perdre la vie. M. de Cholet, lieutenant de vaisseau, reçut trois coups de sabre et deux de bayonnette, et courut les plus grands dangers. M. d'Archimbaud, élève de la Marine, voulant donner du secours au commandant, fut assailli par une troupe de forcenés, et fut heureusement sauvé par une femme qui le fit entrer chez elle. Le peuple se porta dans les auberges où se trouvoient quelques officiers, avec le projet de les égorger tous.

M. le commandeur de Glandèves fut détenu vingt-quatre heures à l'hôtel de ville.

Affaire de M. de Castellet.

Août 1790.

M. de Castellet, obligé de fuir après l'événement du 1^{er} Décembre 1789, s'étoit retiré à Nice ; il désira de retourner avec sûreté dans sa terre de Dardennes, à une lieue de Toulon. La Municipalité de cette ville invita cet officier général à rentrer dans ses foyers, en l'assurant d'une entière protection. M. de Castellet se rendit à Toulon, et y prêta le serment civique. A peine étoit-il rendu chez M. le commandeur de Glandèves, que les ouvriers sortirent de l'arsenal et annoncèrent qu'ils *en vouloient* à M. de Castellet. Cet officier sortit sur le champ de la ville à pied, accompagné de deux officiers et de deux volontaires de la garde nationale, et se voyant poursuivi, il entra avec ses compagnons dans une auberge, et s'y réfugia dans un grenier. Les malfaiteurs arrivèrent ; ils trouvèrent bientôt M. de Castellet, et malgré la présence du maire, ils entraînent cet officier général, ils le traînèrent sur le chemin dans
la

la poussière, après lui avoir volé tout ce qu'il avoit sur lui. Cet infortuné alloit être victime de la fureur du peuple, lorsque deux grenadiers du régiment de Barrois, passant par hasard et sans armes, prirent M. de Castellet sur leurs épaules, et le portèrent criblé de blessures & mourant, à l'hôpital de la Charité.

Deux de ces assassins condamnés aux galères, ont été mis en liberté d'après le vœu de l'amnistie.

ROCHEFORT.

Dans les premiers mois de 1790, M. Macarty-Macaigne, major-général, fut assailli chez lui par deux mille ouvriers armés, sous prétexte que c'étoit lui qui s'opposoit à ce que la cloche du port sonnât les jours de pluie. Il se présenta à eux, et parvint d'abord, par sa contenance ferme, à en imposer à ces révoltés, et à faire tomber les armes de leurs mains ; mais la Municipalité instruite particulièrement que cet officier devoit être assassiné pendant la nuit suivante,

vante, le prévint secrètement, et facilita elle-même sa sortie de la ville.

Il est à observer que M. Macarty-Mac-teigne avoit toujours été chéri et respecté à Rochefort ; ce qui est prouvé même par la première impression que sa présence et ses discours avoient produite sur l'esprit des révoltés. Il est donc bien prouvé qu'ils étoient excités par des suggestions secrètes.

No. IX.

Lettre du roi à l'assemblée nationale, relativement au prétendu Comité Autrichien.

“ Le 20 Mai 1792.

“ J'AI ordonné, M. le Président, au ministre de la justice de faire part à l'assemblée nationale de l'ordre qu'il vient d'adresser de ma part à l'accusateur public au sujet du prétendu comité Autrichien. Il importe au bien de l'état que cette affaire soit parfaitement éclaircie. Je pense que l'assemblée nationale ordonnera de communiquer au tribunal les renseignemens que plusieurs de ses membres ont dit avoir sur cette affaire, elle sentira aisément l'inconvenance qu'il y a de recueillir de pareilles dénonciations, de n'en laisser percer que ce qui peut entretenir les soupçons dans le public, et le danger de me laisser ignorer les autres.

(Signé)

LOUIS.”

No. X.

*Exposé de la conduite du marquis de Bouillé,
rédigé par lui-même pour être remis au roi.*

“ JE n’avoit jamais crû, qu’il fut nécessaire de justifier ma conduite à l’occasion du départ secret du roi pour Montmedy, et de l’arrestation de S. M. à Varennes. Entouré d’officiers qui en ont été témoins, dont plusieurs officiers généraux et autres très-distingués ont suivi mon sort en quittant le royaume lors de ce fatal événement ; ils ont pû et dû me juger, et ils n’ont laissé aucun nuage sur mes intentions, sur mes démarches, ni sur les causes du malheur qui m’a enveloppé avec la famille royale. Si j’ai toujours pensé avec douleur à la catastrophe de Varennes, j’ai crû nécessaire d’en garder le silence ; et surtout inutile d’accuser des personnes qui en ont fait manquer la réussite, par l’inexécution

tion des ordres que je leurs avois donnés, par leur imprudence, et par leur peu de prévoyance, mais, dont les intentions étoient pures, et la bonne volonté bien connue. Cependant, depuis que je fais qu'on a cherché à me donner des torts, à me calomnier, et à me rendre responsable du non succès de cette entreprise ; je crois devoir, quoiqu'à regret, éclairer les personnes pour les quelles j'ai dû employer tous mes moyens ; pour les quelles j'ai tout sacrifié, tout osé ; pour les quelles enfin j'ai fait tout ce qu'un homme peut faire, dans la seule vue de remplir mes devoirs, et de mériter leur estime que je préfère à leurs bienfaits, auxquels je renonce pour jamais.

“ Le roi fait que dès le commencement de la révolution, je voulois quitter la France, et servir des puissances étrangères qui m'offroient du service. Il eut la bonté, vers le mois de Février de l'année 1790, de m'engager à rester à son service et à prêter mon serment, m'assurant que je pouvois lui être utile. J'exécutai ses ordres ; et j'eus l'honneur de lui écrire, que je lui faisois le

plus grand sacrifice qu'un homme pût faire, celui de mes principes et de mes opinions, dans la seule vue de lui prouver mon zèle. Au moins de Juillet de la même année, toutes les troupes que je commandois, que j'avois jusqu'alors conservées dans l'ordre et dans la discipline, ayant suivi l'exemple du reste de l'armée, et s'étant livrées à tous les excès du desordre et de la révolte; au point que je fus mis en joue à Metz par des soldats du régiment de Salm Salm, et livré à leur fureur pendant plus de deux heures; je jugeai que je ne pouvois plus rendre aucun service au roi, ni à la chose publique; je demandai mon congé, qui me fut accordé. J'allois partir, et servir en Russie, où je desirois trouver des occasions d'acquérir de la gloire, quand l'insurrection de Nancy survint, et quand le fils du ministre de la guerre, Monsieur de Gouverney, arriva à Metz, et m'engagea à faire exécuter les ordres du roi et le décret de l'assemblée, contre la garnison et le peuple de Nancy révoltés. Quelque délicate que fût cette commission, je suspendis encore une fois mon départ, dans l'espoir de

de servir le roi et ma malheureuse patrie. Après cet événement, qui réussit mieux que je ne pouvois le présumer, il fut question du départ du roi ; et leurs majestés favent tout ce qui s'est passé, jusqu'au moment où ce projet fut exécuté, je proposai un rassemblement des meilleurs regiments en camp sous Montmedi, ce qui fut adopté. Il est vrai que pendant l'hyver et le printems, on m'ôta mes meilleurs régimens, tels que les Carabiniers, Vigier Suisse, Royal Liégeois, qu'on en éloigna d'autres, tels que le regiment de Saxe Huffard, Royal Normandie Cavalerie, que je comptois employer à protéger le départ du roi : ce qui me contraignit à en employer d'autres moins bons. Je proposai au roi de sortir par la Flandre Autrichienne, ce qui étoit plus court et plus facile ; et de venir à Montmedi par les Ardennes. Il s'y refusa. Je proposai la route de Rheims par Stenay à Montmedi, comme la plus courte, la plus facile, la plus aisée à couvrir : on m'objecta la crainte que la famille royale ne fût reconnue à Rheims. Enfin, j'indiquai celle de Chalons et de

D D 2 Varennes,

Varennés, quoique sujette à des inconvéniens parcequ'il falloit passer par plusieurs villes, parcequ'il n'y avois pas de poste établie dans cette dernière ville. Je proposai de ne pas placer de détachemens pour protéger la marche du roi, en craignant les inconvéniens. On me dit qu'on en vouloit ; je n'insistai pas.

“ Le lieu où le roi devoit arriver et la route qu'il devoit suivre, convenus ; je proposai au roi de la faire reconnoître par M. de Goguelas, officier de l'état major, que je savois lui être particulièrement attaché, et d'employer M. de N——, qui avoit son régiment à portée, pour faire préparer les relais nécessaires. Le roi y consentit, et il me permit de les mettre dans la confiance. Les reconnoissances faites, ainsi que les dispositions projetées pour l'emplacement des troupes, et pour leur rassemblement à Montmédi ; j'envoyai M. de N—— à Paris, pour les communiquer au roi, et pour prendre ses ordres. M. de N—— revint, et m'apporta l'approbation de leurs majestés. J'envoyai encore M. de Goguelas auprès d'elles,

d'elles, pour leur donner une explication plus détaillée de sa reconnoissance et des dispositions. Je revins peu de jours avant le départ du roi, qui avoit été fixé au 19 Juin, et M. de Goguelas me joignit à Montmedi.

“ J'avois remis à Metz à M. de N—— les ordres du roi, pour les détachemens que je devois placer à Pont-de-Sommevelle et à St. Menehoult, et il s'étoit chargé de disposer le relai à Varennes: il avoit dû en conséquence, donner les instructions à un capitaine de son régiment. J'avois donné à M. de Damas ceux pour les deux escadrons qui devoient être placés à Clermont. M. de N—— repartit pour Paris, dans l'intention de devancer le roi de quelques heures, de l'attendre à Pont-de-Sommevelle, de prendre le commandement des détachemens jusqu'à Clermont, où M. de Damas devoit se réunir à lui, et escorter la famille royale jusqu'à Stenay, où je devois être. Je donnai des ordres pour les dispositions des détachemens, et pour le mouvement des troupes qui devoient se rassembler à Mont-

medi au nombre de 9 bataillons et 26 escadrons : l'artillerie y étoit déjà placée ainsi que les effets de campement, et les approvisionnemens étoient faits.

“ M. de Goguelas me quitta à Stenay le 16 ou le 17, le fur lendemain du jour où je reçus une lettre du roi qui m'annonçoit qu'au lieu de partir le 19, il avoit remis son départ au 20 de Juin, ce qui me contraria et m'obligea de changer les ordres des troupes qui les avoient déjà reçus. J'avois ordonné à M. de Goguelas d'aller à Pont-de-Sommevelle avec un détachement de 40 hussards qui devoient y attendre le roi et l'escorter. Je lui remis les ordres du roi pour les détachemens de Varennes et de Dun : M. de N——, qui devoit l'y joindre avoit ceux pour les autres, qui tous n'avoient pour objet dans le principe que l'escorte d'un convoi d'argent ; ceux pour escorter le roi, ne devant leur être donnés, que par M M. de N—— et de Goguelas au moment où ils seroient instruits de son arrivée par un de ses courriers. Ce dernier devoit donc attendre le roi à Pont-de-

de-Sommevelle, tenir deux relais entre cet endroit et Stenay, afin de pouvoir instruire plus promptement les commandants de détachement de l'arrivée du roi avec M. de N——. Il devoit placer le relai pour le roi qui étoit à Varennes, de manière qu'il pût le trouver en arrivant dans cette ville : et enfin, m'instruire de bonne heure, soit de son arrivée prochaine, afin de tout préparer pour le recevoir, ou de son arrestation : ou m'avertir s'il n'étoit pas parti, devant en être instruit par un courrier qui avoit dû être laissé à Bondy et en partir à quatre heures du matin si le roi n'avoit pas passé. Je convins avec lui que je resterois toute la nuit jusqu'à la pointe du jour, entre Stenay et Dun ; qu'il y auroit un détachement de Royal Allemand qui y seroit placé pour escorter le roi jusqu'à Montmedi, tandis que le reste de ce régiment resteroit à Stenay prêt à monter à cheval. Je lui recommandai d'attendre le roi jusqu'à la nuit et le plus tard qu'il pourroit, et de me faire avertir à tems des événemens. Il fut en

même tems convenu avec lui, ainsi qu'il l'avoit été avec M. de N——, que si le roi ne vouloit pas être reconnu, les détachements le suivroient de loin et se rendroient à Varennes : que celui de Pont-de-Sommevelle resteroit à la croisière des chemins de Clermont et de Varennes pendant 18 ou 19 heures pour arrêter tous les courriers.—Tels étoient les ordres donnés, les précautions prises et convenues ; et que personne n'osera me nier.

“ J'arrivai le 20 à Stenay ; et le 21 au matin je confiai aux officiers généraux, MM. d'Offlize, de Klinglin, et Heymann, le départ du roi ; je le confiai également aux chefs de corps. Je fis partir pour Mouza, village situé entre Stenay et Dun, le détachement de 50 hommes de Royal Allemand, pour escorter le roi ; et j'ordonnai à ce régiment de se tenir prêt à monter à cheval, à la petite pointe du jour. J'avois fait tous les préparatifs pour tracer le camp de Montmedi, et les troupes devoient arriver successivement le 21, le 22, et le

le 23. J'avois dans le plus grand secret fait acheter la viande, et préparer le pain nécessaire.

“ J'eus la précaution, le soir du 21, d'envoyer deux officiers à Varennes, dont l'un étoit un de mes fils, pour veiller sur le relai du roi, et m'avertir: j'ordonnai à M. de Klinglin de retourner à Montmedi, afin de tout préparer pour recevoir le roi, et à M. Heymann d'aller sur la Sauve pour y réunir deux régiments d'Huffards et les conduire au camp de Montmédi. Quant à moi, à la nuit je montai à cheval, et je me plaçai auprès de Dun où je restai jusqu'à la pointe du jour, ayant eu la précaution de me faire suivre d'un attelage de chevaux de voiture pour servir à celle du roi. Le jour paroissant, et n'ayant pas de nouvelles, je regagnai Stenay, afin d'être à portée de donner des ordres à M. de Klinglin et au régiment de Royal Allemand, s'il étoit arrivé un accident au roi, au quel je pusse remédier. J'étois à la porte de Stenay un peu avant quatre heures du matin, quand les deux officiers que j'avois envoyés à Varennes, et
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(ce qui métonna beaucoup) le commandant du détachement d'huffards qui y étoit placé, vinrent m'avertir que la famille royale étoit arrêtée à Varennes. Je parus également étonné d'avoir été averti aussi tard: je m'informai de ce qui avoit donné lieu à cet événement. On me dit seulement que les troupes, soit à Varennes ou à Clermont, et dans les autres postes, n'avoient pas fait leur devoir, et qu'elles étoient gagnées. Je jugeai que je devois m'assurer du régiment Royal Allemand qui étoit ma principale force, et me mettre à sa tête pour délivrer le roi, et que je devois protéger sa marche à Montmédi, contre la ville de Stenay, qui étoit mauvaise, et contre Sédan, qui étoit plus dangereux par les dispositions du peuple très nombreux de cette ville, et celles de la garnison où il y avoit un très mauvais régiment. En conséquence, je donnai ordre au régiment Royal Allemand de monter promptement à cheval, à M. de Klinglin de marcher à Stenay, et d'y rester avec deux escadrons des chasseurs de Champagne, et d'envoyer un bataillon de

Naffau

Nassau à Dun, pour garder le passage sur la Meuse : en même tems, de faire avancer à tire-d'aile le régiment Suisse de Castella, sur Montmédi. J'ordonnai enfin à un détachement d'hussards qui étoit à Dun, et à celui de Royal Allemand qui étoit à Mouza de se porter sur le champ sur Varennes. Le premier de ces détachemens n'attendit pas mes ordres, et partit dès qu'il fût l'arrestation du roi. Ces ordres donnés, j'attendis le régiment Royal Allemand, qui fut une mortelle heure avant que de sortir de la ville, quoi que j'eusse ordonné qu'il fût prêt à monter à cheval à la pointe du jour. Ce fut en vain que j'envoyai mon fils cinq ou six fois au commandant pour le presser, et encore une fois, je ne pouvois rien entreprendre sans ce régiment, du quel il falloit m'assurer ; et j'avoue que je n'avois confiance qu'en moi pour l'enlever. Dès qu'il fut hors de la ville, j'annonçai aux cavaliers que le roi étoit arrêté ; je leur lûs l'ordre de sa majesté qui enjoignoit aux troupes de l'escorter et de tout employer pour sa sûreté et celle de sa famille. Je les trouvai

trouvai dans les meilleures dispositions ; je leur distribuai trois ou quatre cent louis, et je me mis en marche à la tête de ce régiment. Il y a huit très grandes lieues de Stenay à Varennes, et un chemin de montagnes très difficile. Je voyois avec regret qu'on m'eût averti aussi tard : je pouvois l'être deux heures plutôt si on n'eût pas perdu un instant à m'envoyer quelqu'un de Varennes dès que le roi y étoit arrivé ; j'étois également fâché de la lenteur, que le régiment Royal Allemand avoit mise à monter à cheval ; et je regrettois d'avoir perdu deux heures et demie : non que je craignisse de ne plus trouver la famille royale à Varennes, ne pouvant imaginer que la municipalité de cette ville ôfât forcer le roi à partir pour Paris, et supposant qu'au moins, on auroit exécuté l'ordre que j'avois donné de ne laisser passer aucun courrier sur la route après le passage du roi. Toute mon inquiétude portoit sur les obstacles que la lenteur du secours que je conduisois au roi augmenteroit soit pour le délivrer, soit pour sa sûreté dans son retour :

et

et chaque quart d'heure de perdu les multiplioit ainsi que les dangers. Je fis donc le plus de diligence possible. Je rencontrai à quelque distance de Varennes, le détachement de Royal Allemand que j'avois fait partir d'avance, arrêté dans un bois par des gardes nationales qui les fusilloient. Je les fis disperser, et je me mis à la tête de ce détachement, suivi à peu de distance du reste du régiment. J'arrivai à neuf heures un quart auprès de Varennes, et je reconnoissois l'endroit pour le faire attaquer dès que le régiment seroit arrivé, quand je vis un détachement des hussards de Lauzun qui étoit en dehors de la ville dont le commandant M. Deslong vint à moi, et m'annonça que le roi étoit parti depuis une heure et demie. Il en étoit alors neuf et demie, je fus rejoindre le régiment Royal Allemand et M. d'Offize, qui étoit à sa tête. Je proposai de passer outre. M. Deslong, qui avoit été dans Varennes, et qui avoit parlé au roi, me dit que le pont étoit embarrassé, même rompû, qu'il avoit voulu passer la rivière, mais, qu'il n'avoit pu trouver

ver de gué. On m'objecta à la tête du régiment que la garnison de Verdun marchoit sur nous, que nous pouvions tout au plus, faire 4 lieues encore, ce qui étoit insuffisant pour joindre le roi : le régiment en avoit déjà fait près de neuf très vite, et je ne vis aucune volonté d'aller plus loin, ce qui véritablement devenoit inutile. Je ramenai donc Royal Allemand à Stenay, d'où je partis pour Luxembourg avec les officiers généraux et plusieurs officiers particuliers au moment où on déliberoit pour nous arrêter : l'ordre en étoit même déjà donné sur la frontière où nous passâmes de force, en essuyant quelques coups de fusil.

“ Je demande si on peut m'imputer d'aucune manière, d'avoir été cause de ce malheureux événement ; s'il a dépendu de moi, de remédier à tous les torts qu'ont eu les personnes employées à l'exécution de ce projet ; dont aucune, on peut le dire, excepté M. de Damas, qui est venu de sa personne à Varennes, sa troupe ayant refusé de le suivre, n'a fait son devoir et n'a exécuté mes ordres. J'ignore pourquoi M. de

Goguelas et M. de N—— porteurs des ordres du roi, chargés de l'exécution des miens, et de toutes les dispositions; n'ont pas attendu le roi à Pont-de Sommevelle : pourquoi ayant quitté ce poste d'où dépendoit le succès, ils n'ont pas suivi, ou l'un d'eux au moins, la grande route que devoit prendre le roi : pourquoi arrivés à Varennes peu de tems après le roi, au lieu de perorer la municipalité et la garde nationale, et de demander aux hussards s'ils étoient pour le roi ou pour la nation, ils ne sont pas tombés sur la populace qui étoit alors en petit nombre et ne l'ont pas dissipée : pourquoi ils ne m'ont pas fait avertir sur le champ, devant calculer qu'il falloit au moins trois heures à un courrier pour faire les huit grandes lieues de Varennes à Stenay, une demie heure pour préparer le régiment Royal Allemand et sortir de Stenay; et quatres heures et demie ou cinq heures pour le conduire à Varennes, ce qui employoit huit heures et demie. Si on eut fait partir quelqu'un pour m'avertir dès onze heures et demie : j'arrivois à sept heures

heures et demie ou huit heures, et je pouvois sauver le roi. Pourquoi encore, ne pas prendre les mesures qui avoient été ordonnées pour arrêter à St. Menehoult les courriers de Paris, et l'aide de camp de M. de la Fayette qui ont décidé le départ du roi de Varennes. Pourquoi, s'ils n'ont pû le délivrer, n'ont ils pas pris tous les moyens pour l'empêcher de partir, et il y en avoit mille. Je dis toutes ces choses à regret, et uniquement parcequ'on m'a assuré qu'ils avoient réjetté sur moi les événemens de cette journée, et que pour s'excuser ils avoient dit au roi, que je devois arriver et que j'arriverois pour le sauver. Mais, il falloit que je fusse averti à tems, il falloit que j'eusse avec moi des forces suffisantes pour forcer tous les obstacles. Pouvois-je laisser le régiment Royal Allemand dans Stenay où il pouvoit être enfermé par les gardes nationales et le peuple comme les dragons l'ont été à St. Menehoult et à Clermont? Ne devois-je pas m'assurer de ce régiment sans le quel je ne pouvois espérer de délivrer le roi, étant informé qu'il y avoit un

peuple immense déjà rassemblé à Varennes, que les dragons de Clermont avoient refusé de marcher, que les hussards de Varennes étoient mal disposés ? Ne devois-je pas prendre des précautions pour assurer la marche du roi de Varennes à Montmedi contre la ville de Stenay et celle de Sedan ? Et si on m'eût fait dire qu'il falloit arriver sur le champ sans perdre un moment, avec ce que j'avois dans la main : moi seul, je serois parti à l'instant, et j'aurois négligé toutes les précautions que j'ai crû indispensable de prendre. Mais, je demandai des nouvelles de M. de Goguelas de M. de N——. A peine pût on m'en donner, et je n'en entendis pas parler.

“ Je crois que si on veut examiner avec impartialité ma conduite, que je rougis d'être obligé de justifier, on verra que mes dispositions ont été exactement ordonnées et que j'ai été le seul à ma place. Le retard qu'on m'accuse d'avoir mis à conduire le secours au roi ne peut être imputé qu'à ceux qui m'ont fait avertir de sa situation. Décidé à tout tenter pour le sauver, il m'é-

toit trop important d'arriver avec des forces suffisantes pour le delivrer le plutôt possible, chaque instant de perdû, multipliant les difficultés et les dangers.

“ On a été jusqu'à me reprocher la lettre que j'ai écrite à l'assemblée, dictée, à-t-on dit, par un esprit de fanfaronnade. Dans un moment de fureur et de vengeance, je n'ai eu d'autre objet que de détourner celle du peuple qui étoit dérigée contre le roi et la reine. A-t-on pû s'y méprendre ? Eussé-je été, sans cela, assez in conséquent pour me mettre dans le cas de faire confisquer mes biens, de me faire proscrire, moi et les miens ; de faire mettre ma tête à prix ; de me faire poursuivre par les poignards ; si je n'avois eu le dessein de sauver le roi ? ”



END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

